PATTERNS OF POWER

Japanese Okinawa

The Complete Study

1609 — 1879 — 1972

Thomas J. Bryan
with Claude (Anthropic)

Held as tested, not revealed.

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PREFACE

PREFACE AND OUTLINE

Front matter · how this study was made, the disciplines it holds itself to, and a map of its fourteen parts

A case study in the Patterns of Power series · Thomas J. Bryan with Claude (Anthropic) · held as tested, not revealed

The collaboration

This is a case study in the Patterns of Power series, applying the series' framework to the Ryūkyū Islands, from the Satsuma invasion of 1609 to the reversion of Okinawa Prefecture to Japanese administration in 1972, with the account carried forward where the record requires it. The framework is a lens for reading how any order of power is founded, dressed, and held: the floor of force beneath every order, the robe of doctrine laid over the floor to make the force cheap, the settlement that divides the spoils, the cost column in which each subject prices defection, the seam that manages the belief on which the whole depends, the default by which an elite coordinates without instruction, and — running through all of it — position logic, the proposition that rulers in like positions converge on like solutions because a position poses a problem with only a few good answers.

Okinawa was chosen for three reasons, and each turned out to do work the collection could not have got elsewhere.

The first is that it is the only case in the corpus in which the same ground was taken twice by the same nation's states, two hundred and seventy years apart, by opposite methods. Satsuma in 1609 found a complete and seizable apex — a king, a council, a surveyable tax base, an appointed officialdom, a national priesthood —

and declined to occupy it, surveying the kingdom, granting it back to its own king as a fief and leaving twenty men in a house at Naha for the next two and a half centuries. Meiji Japan in 1879 found the same apparatus, abolished the king, and then kept his tax machine running for twenty-four years. That lets the fork between assuming a conquered apex and renting one be tested with the terrain, the population and the conquering nation all held constant, which no other case in this collection permits.

The second is that it is the control case for the collection's study of Hokkaidō. One state, five acquisitions in forty-one years, one doctrine, overlapping personnel. Hokkaidō had no native elite to co-opt and Okinawa had a complete one — literate, office-holding, self-reproducing, with a written history of its own — and the two cases run the same imperial doctrine to opposite results. Where Hokkaidō showed what an order gains from a people with nobody to speak for it, Okinawa shows what it costs to have somebody, and what that somebody does with the position.

The third is that this order did not naturalise. Hokkaidō ended by ceasing to be a question, which made it the corpus's clearest speci ‐ men of a machine that runs itself. Okinawa was fought over as a delaying action in 1945 at a cost of about one inhabitant in four, detached from Japan by treaty in 1952, administered by the United States for twenty-seven years, returned in 1972, and remains a question — which makes it the corpus's clearest specimen of a conquest that was handed back and did not dissolve.

The study was built the way the series is built, one module at a time. The author brought the framework, the direction, and the judgement of the whole, and held the collaboration to its discip ‐ lines; Claude, Anthropic's model, did the research — verifying every load-bearing quotation, date, and figure by search against a source reproducing the primary text before any module was written — and produced the drafts, applying the framework module by module, each presented and confirmed before the next was begun. The framework's concepts are the series'; the Okinawan application, and the refinements it yielded, are the work of the collaboration.

Its engine throughout is the method of information asymmetry: setting the exact public words beside the exact words of the ground and letting the distance speak. A bell cast for Shuri Castle in 1458 declaring the kingdom a bridge between the myriad nations, beside an imperial edict of 1871 declaring that Japan must stand against the myriad nations. An imperial decree of 1872 asserting that Ryūkyū's speech and writing are not different, beside a mainland principal telling an assembled school in 1894 that its pupils could not properly use so much as the ordinary language. A per-capita levy preserved in 1879 for the state's convenience, cited in the Diet in 1899 as the reason the population could not be given the vote. A malaria prevention squad built by the prefecture in Yaeyama, beside an army order in 1945 moving the population of those islands into the districts the squad had mapped as lethal. The study lays out the arithmetic and leaves the sum to the reader. It does not preach the conclusion.

Two limitations are structural and are stated here rather than buried. The first is linguistic. A large part of this record exists only in Japanese, much of it in Meiji and early-modern administrative Japanese, and several load-bearing passages are flagged in their sources notes as seen only at one remove and needing collation against originals this study could not reach — among them Haneji Chōshū's memorandum of 1673, a principal's address of 1894, and the Kōdōkai petition of 1896, whose text would test one of the study's central findings and which this study has read only in summary.

The second is political. The status of the Ryūkyū Kingdom before 1879 is a live argument in which the People's Republic of China has a present interest, and the concentration of United States military facilities in the prefecture is a live domestic dispute in which Japanese governments of both parties, successive prefectural administrations and the United States all hold positions. Where this study rests on a claim bearing on either, it quotes the instrument, reports the competing readings as each side states them, and does not adjudicate.

The disciplines

Five rules govern every module.

Quotation. Public-domain primary sources — laws, decrees, oaths, inscriptions, ordinances, official reports, parliamentary records — are quoted exactly, in the original and with a translation, at the length the argument needs, because in a legal fiction the precise wording is the evidence. Modern copyrighted scholarship is paraphrased, briefly, and credited.

No fabrication. No quotation, date, attribution, or figure is ever invented or reconstructed from memory. What cannot be verified is dropped or flagged, never guessed; contested figures are given as ranges, and this case has many — the 1611 survey assessment, the Ryūkyū component of Satsuma's kokudaka, the population before 1880, the strength of the party that took Shuri in 1879, the American losses in 1945, and the crowd counts at three prefectural rallies.

Gravity without partisanship. Suffering is held with gravity, and the study refuses both flattery and demonisation — it names the legal fiction as fiction and explains the order's logic without excusing it. Its recurring watchword is legibility is not pardon.

Contribution. Every module returns a refinement to the framework, stated plainly in its closing section, rather than merely applying the framework to the case.

Held as tested, not revealed. The pattern is treated as something discovered and tested against the evidence, not handed down as doctrine — a lens laid over the record, a tendency and never a law. Where the evidence overturned an earlier finding of this same study, the reversal was made in the open and is recorded in the eleventh module.

What Okinawa added to the framework

Because this is the collection's first case of a conquest undertaken for position rather than for ground or for labour, and its only doubled conquest, it was able to name features the settler colonies

obscure. Chief among the refinements the study contributed: that the framework's founding fork needs a second question — what the conqueror wants — and that where the want is position, the con - quest produces a colony indistinguishable in most years from a province, because position is satisfied by the name, and a territory held for position becomes disposable the moment a better position appears; that where a conquered apex's value derives from recog - nition by a party the conqueror cannot coerce, he cannot assume the chair but must rent it, so that the arrangement's characteristic cost is concealment rather than garrison and its termination con - dition is written in from the start; that where a conqueror takes over a functioning administration rather than a functioning army, the cost of the conquest migrates from the battlefield to the registry and its measure is the number of officials who had to be made to sign; that an inherited disarmament is the cheapest item on the menu and flatters whoever arrives last, since he pays nothing for it and reports the quiet home as consent; that preserving the conquered order's property and tax law is not restraint but the cheapest available form of extraction, and that a preserved order arrives with its surveillance already installed, which will therefore appear in nobody's budget; that the cheapest robe of all is one the conquered themselves wrote for an earlier conqueror, because it costs nothing and arrives pre-defended; that a robe of common ancestry is the only kind the conquered can use offensively, and that its use takes the form of a demand to be re-ranked at the ex - pense of populations ranked lower; that where formation is offered on terms of kinship rather than permanent difference, the conquered attack the ration and not the formation; that a formation campaign is systematically understated by its own paper record, because its cheapest and most intimate instrument leaves no order to find; that where a colony's ground yields too little to be worth working the extractable asset becomes the population itself and the flow reverses, arriving home as remittances that appear in no co - lonial ledger; that making a peasant a proprietor is an extractive instrument whose extractive character is invisible because the

moment of transfer looks like a gift; that a colony reduced to one crop is hostage not to the world price but to the metropole's next acquisition; that the intensity of an order's concealment measures the power of the audience it is hiding from rather than the gravity of what is hidden; that where a conquered elite has been co-opted the censorship file is empty because the suppression was subcon - tracted, in the colony's own voice, against the colony's own people; that an opposition press disappears without ever being suppressed, so that an absence of dissenting sources will record a defeat as a consensus; that a co-opted elite's maximal public demand locates the boundary of the default and will always concede the conquest, because it names the largest thing they can ask for without forfeit - ing what they have already been given; that where a conqueror distributes offices to persons rather than to groups, no faction can sustain a demand that would cost its own members their advance - ment; that inside a constitutional state exclusion is administered by exception rather than by denial, and that the justification offered will be true because the state itself manufactured the disqualifica - tion; that a legitimating formula becomes something functionally like a right at the point where an institution exists that is obliged to hear people repeating it back, so that the residue of liberty requires a forum and the forum is what plurality actually supplies; that a ring's date of admission is the best available measure of its bar - gaining position; that an externally opened window opens over a jurisdiction rather than over a people; that a defeated metropole's periphery is the most saleable asset it holds, because it is the only one whose loss will not be felt by the electorate that ratifies the treaty; that a conquest naturalises only when nothing about the territory any longer requires a separate decision, and that where one question must still be answered separately the colonial status does not dissolve but migrates into that question and lives there; that a preserved order does not default on its metabolic note at the conquest but later and by price, a monoculture's carrying capacity being a function of a quotation in another country rather than of an acreage; that where a population can leave, the metabolic default is

discharged through the passport office rather than the graveyard, so that an emigration of twelve per cent is a famine that produced no corpses; that a colonial order's public-health file is also a map of where its population must not be sent, and which purpose it serves depends on whether that population is currently an asset or an ob - struction; and that a survey of what a formation policy prohibited will systematically miss the prohibitions that fall on women, be - cause those leave no abolished office, no extinguished income, and nobody with a position who lost one.

The arc

A landscape opening and twelve modules, each with a framework function and its own evocative title.

Landscape — the two orders on the eve of 1879. To Stand Against the Myriad Nations. A kingdom assembled by a conquest in 1429 and a palace coup in 1469, over an office a Ming envoy's recognition had substantially manufactured in 1372, whose weapons a king gathered to Shuri in the sixteenth century and whose priestesses he nationalised in the 1470s — conquered by Satsuma in 1609 and then handed back to its own king, because a Chinese trade licence at - taches to an investitured person and cannot be taken by force; and above it a Japanese state four years old, under extraterritorial jur - isdiction on its own soil, whose founding administrative doctrine was that name and substance must correspond.

1 — The Floor of Force. The Gates That Would Not Open. Six hundred men, four days, no shots and no casualties — because the weapons had been gathered by somebody else three hundred and seventy years earlier; and then, four months later, a hundred offi - cials in cells, bound at the wrists and beaten with rods, because the offices had stopped opening.

2 — The Settlement. The State's Ground, the People's Trees. A disposition officer writing in March 1879 that the shizoku stipends must not be touched, because touching them at home had pro - duced the Satsuma war two years before; feudal fiefs confirmed and

money stipends paid until 1909; and a land statute of 1899 that made every farmer the owner of the plot he already worked, in a sentence that reads like the recording of a fact.

3 — **The Robe.** No Doubt They Came from Japan. A Ryūkyūan regent asserting common Japanese descent in the kingdom's own official history in 1650 and in his own memorandum in 1673, and a Meiji decree of 1872 reciting it as established fact; and a shrine ranked in 1890 beyond what the governor had asked for, on the file's own reasoning that the inhabitants' loyalty was in doubt.

4 — **Formation.** You Cannot Even Use the Ordinary Language. A language school opened inside the government building in Febru - ary 1880 for the sons of the class that had refused to open the of - fices; an attendance rate of 2.85 per cent in 1883, the lowest in Ja - pan, tripling after the war of 1895; a principal telling an assembled school it was in a pitiable position and moving to abolish English; and six months of strike by pupils demanding to be taught more.

5 — **The Cost Column.** Sixteen Bales Out of Eighteen. A Miyako household owing sixteen bales in tribute millet on a total harvest of eighteen, under a levy imposed in 1637 and preserved by the pre - fecture; a watching apparatus the conqueror inherited rather than built; and three exits — to China at five hundred days' risk, to the Imperial Diet at the price of a sold field, and to the cane fields of Oahu.

6 — **Extraction.** Thirty Years, and Then the Land. One crop, taxed by the metropole from 1901 while the metropole capitalised a newer colony's sugar; a common forest taken into state ownership and sold to nobles, outside merchants and officials; an island group owned outright by a company that issued its own currency and ex - cluded the yen; and an export of seventy-two thousand people whose wages came home as more than half the prefecture's reven - ue.

7 — **Information and Suppression.** Dealt With As Spies. A censor that prosecuted editors for fifty years and was never pointed at this prefecture, because the newspaper was founded by the deposed king's fourth son and opened with the governor's own overseer in

the editor's chair; an opposition paper that vanished without being banned; and an army bulletin of 9 April 1945 applying the school-room's criterion with the penalty changed.

8 — Elite Coordination and the Default. A Hereditary Governor. Three factions with three newspapers, thirty years of public war between them, and a maximal demand — that the deposed dynasty be made hereditary governors of a Japanese prefecture — which conceded in its own terms everything the conquest had claimed; and a boy expelled from school in 1895 for striking against a mainland principal, put through the Naval Academy by the governor, made rear-admiral, and married to the last king's daughter.

9 — Plurality or Foreclosure. An Unfair Result. A prefecture excluded by name from the founding electoral law of 1889; an official explaining truthfully in 1899 that nobody there would qualify, because of institutions his own government had preserved; a franchise granted in 1900 whose commencement date the executive held until 1912; and farmers from Hirara in 1906 quoting the emperor's own formula of impartial benevolence back at the House of Peers, and being heard.

10 — Change and Collapse. The Day of Humiliation. A battle fought on a strategy of attrition to buy time for the invasion of somewhere else; a directive of January 1946 detaching the islands from the country that was being reformed; a treaty article by which the metropole's recovered sovereignty was purchased with the periphery; and a share of the American bases that rose after the islands were returned.

11 — The Grim Accounting. One Hundred and Seventy-Four by the Enemy. A conquest that called no metabolic note because it broke no coordination, and a default forty-two years later triggered by a sugar price; a departure of twelve per cent of the population in place of a famine; three thousand six hundred and forty-seven dead of an evacuation into districts the state's own public-health files had mapped as malarial; and six hundred and ninety-two women arrested in five years for the tattoos on their hands.

12 — Convergence and Divergence. Called a Prefecture from the First Day. What this case shares with the others and where it breaks them; the strongest case that none of it was a conquest, stated at full strength from the scholarship that makes it; and the answer, which concedes most of it.

LANDSCAPE

TO STAND AGAINST THE MYRIAD NATIONS

Landscape — the two orders on the eve of 1879: the kingdom the Meiji state found, how it had been built and twice taken, and what the state that came for it had spent eleven years making of itself

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Two uses of the same two characters

In 1458 a bronze bell was cast for the main hall of Shuri Castle. It weighs some 721 kilograms, it survived the shelling of 1945 with the marks still on it, and across its face runs a passage of classical Chinese composed by a Rinzai monk, Keiin Anzen, at the commission of King Shō Taikyū. It opens:

> 琉球國者南海勝地而、鍾三韓之秀、以大明爲輔車、以日域爲脣齒、在此二中間湧出之蓬萊嶋也。以舟楫爲万國之津梁、異産至寶充滿十方刹。

The country of Ryūkyū is a place of excellence in the southern sea. It gathers the finest of the Three Han; it takes Great Ming as its cheekbone and jaw; it takes the realm of the sun as its lips and teeth; and between these two it is the isle of Penglai risen from the water. With ships and oars it is made the bridge between the myri - ad nations, and rare goods and precious treasures fill its lands in all directions.

Four hundred and thirteen years later, on the fourteenth day of the seventh month of Meiji 4 — 29 August 1871 — an imperial edict abolished every domain in Japan. Its first sentence gives the reason:

> 朕惟フニ更始ノ時ニ際シ内以テ億兆ヲ保安シ外以テ万国ト対峙セント欲セハ宜ク名実相副ヒ政令一ニ帰セシムヘシ

We consider that, at this moment of renewal, if within We would secure the myriad people and without would stand against the myriad nations, then name and substance must correspond and the orders of government must be gathered into one.

The same two characters, bankoku, the myriad nations, carry the whole distance between the two orders. The kingdom's account of itself was that it lay between the powers and lived on the passage; the new Japanese state's account of itself was that it must become a power and could no longer afford anything that lay between. What follows is what each of those orders actually was on the eve of the year they met.

There was no first kingdom

Nowhere is blank, and Okinawa had been remade several times before anyone in it sent tribute anywhere. Through the twelfth to fourteenth centuries the island filled with gusuku — hilltop enclosures of fitted limestone, several hundred of them — and with the men the record calls aji, local lords holding a district and a fortification and fighting one another for the rest. By the fourteenth century the contest had consolidated into three principalities on the one island: Hokuzan in the north, Chūzan in the centre, Nanzan in the south.

The event that made a kingdom out of that was not a Ryūkyūan event. In 1372 the Hongwu emperor of the newly founded Ming sent an envoy, Yang Zai, to demand tribute. Yang Zai presented the imperial proclamation to Chūzan, the strongest of the three, whose lord was Satto; Satto accepted, sent his brother Taiki to Nanjing with local products in the twelfth month of the same year, and was styled King of Ryūkyū — while controlling, as Gregory Smits has stressed, only a portion of central Okinawa. Hokuzan and Nanzan followed the next year. Akamine Mamoru's judgement on the 1372 embassy is worth setting down plainly, in paraphrase, because it is

a specialist saying the thing the record shows: before Yang Zai there had been no intercourse with China, and no royal authority of the kind a unified polity would require. The title was not the recognition of a kingdom. It was one of the materials out of which a kingdom was afterwards assembled.

The assembly took two generations and it was done by force. Shō Hashi, ruling Chūzan from behind his father's throne and then in his own name, took Nakijin and destroyed Hokuzan in 1416, received investiture and the dynastic surname Shō from the Ming court in 1421, and destroyed Nanzan in 1429. He moved the capital to Shuri, built the port at Naha, and adopted a Chinese court hierarchy. Forty years after his death the throne changed hands again, and not by inheritance: in 1469 King Shō Toku died without a surviving heir, and a palace steward named Kanamaru — remembered as a farmer's son from the small island of Izena — took the throne, presented himself to the Ming court as the dead king's adopted son, and obtained investiture under the name Shō En. The line he founded, distinguished by later historians as the second Shō, held Shuri until 1879.

So the order that the Meiji surveyors found in the 1870s rested on two seizures and a foreign patent: a conquest in 1429, a coup in 1469, and in both cases a Chinese emperor's document supplying the warrant. This is not a demotion of it. Four centuries later the arrangement was simply how the world was arranged, held by people for whom it had never been otherwise, and it was more real for having been built and having taken. But there is no innocent floor beneath it to appeal to, and the study will not pretend otherwise.

What Shō Shin built, and what he did with the priestesses

The kingdom acquired the shape it would keep under Shō En's son, Shō Shin, who reigned from 1477 to 1527 — the longest reign in the line, and the one the later record calls the golden age.

He brought the aji off their districts and settled them at Shuri, where they became a resident court nobility drawing income from lands they no longer sat on; the districts, the magiri, were thereafter administered by officials the court appointed and could remove. He gathered swords, bows and arrows to the capital. A stone tablet set at the balustrade of the main hall in 1509, the Momoura-soe rankan no mei, lists eleven achievements of his reign, of which the fourth records the collection of blades and bows for the defence of the country. This study has not been able to reach the tablet's classical text and gives its content as reported in the Japanese reference literature; the point does not depend on the wording, because the effect is visible in the administrative record either way. Nothing here is disarmament in the modern sense. It is the movement of the means of violence from many hands into one, which is what a state is.

The other half of the build is easier to miss and matters more for what comes later. Ryūkyūan religion ran, and still partly runs, on onarigami — the belief that a sister holds spiritual power protective of her brother — and on the noro, priestesses serving the sacred groves, the utaki, of their own localities, drawn from the powerful families of those localities. This was authority that had grown from below and sat in many places at once. Shō Shin created above it, in 1477 or 1478, the office of kikoe-ōgimi, the supreme priestess, appointed his own sister to it, gave her a residence beside Shuri Castle and the keeping of the Sonohyan-utaki within it, made her the ritual celebrant at Sefa-utaki, the holiest ground on the island, and assigned a noro to every village in the kingdom under her authority, in a hierarchy that ran parallel to the male official hierarchy, appointment by appointment.

He did not invent a faith and he did not need to. He took a trusted channel that other people had spent centuries earning, and pointed it at the throne. It is the cheapest way to acquire the third leg of an order, and Ryūkyū's kings had done it three hundred and thirty-two years before the Japanese state arrived to try the same operation on the same island.

The bridge, and what it actually was

The bell's boast was accurate about the position and reticent about the mechanism. Ryūkyū sent something over a hundred and sev - enty tribute missions to the Ming across that dynasty's span, more than any other tributary; Chūzan alone had sent forty-two before unification, against Nanzan's twenty-four and Hokuzan's eleven. Chinese investiture envoys came the other way, sailing from Fuzhou, staying four to eight months, and conducting the cere - mony that made each new occupant of Shuri a king.

What the kingdom lived on was the licence attached to that rela - tionship. A tributary might trade; a non-tributary might not. Ryūkyū bought Japanese silver, swords and lacquer, Southeast Asi - an pepper, sappanwood and ivory, and its own sulphur and shells, and moved them through Fujian; a community of Chinese descent at Kumemura, by Naha harbour, supplied the classical literacy, the navigation and the diplomatic drafting the traffic required, and supplied in time much of the kingdom's senior officialdom. The wealth was not in the islands. Okinawa is coral limestone with thin soil and no metals worth the name. The wealth was in the passage, and the passage was a legal permission held by a person — the investitured king — and by nobody else.

Hold that, because it is the single fact that determines everything Satsuma did in 1609. What Shuri owned was not a mine or a har - vest. It was a licence that could not be transferred by taking it.

1609

Satsuma came for the licence, and it came broke. The Shimazu had been beaten by Hideyoshi in 1587, had carried heavy service bur - dens through the Korean campaigns, had come out of Sekigahara on the losing side and kept their lands only through three years of negotiation, and were pressing Shuri through the 1590s and 1600s over trade control and over a demand for provisions for the Korean war that Ryūkyū had met by half and then ignored. In 1609, with

Tokugawa Ieyasu's licence, the fleet sailed from Kagoshima — something over three thousand fighting men in about a hundred vessels, on the figures the standard accounts give — took the Amami islands, landed on Okinawa, and had Shuri in the fourth month. The court's policy throughout was to sue for terms rather than to fight a general defence.

King Shō Nei and something over a hundred of his officials were carried to Kagoshima, and in 1610 north again, to Sunpu for an audience with Ieyasu and to Edo for one with the shogun Hidetada. Meanwhile Satsuma's surveyors ran a cadastral survey on the Hideyoshi model — fourteen commissioners and a hundred and sixty-eight officials, two hundred and seventy-odd survey registers — and in the ninth month of Keichō 16, 1611, produced a figure: 89,086 koku for Okinawa and the islands south of it, excluding Amami, which had been detached and put under Satsuma's own magistrates. The figure was later corrected to 83,085 when an error in the Miyako assessment was found. Of the total, 50,000 koku was designated the king's own demesne, and a schedule of enfeoffment was issued to him.

That is the shape of it: the conqueror surveyed a kingdom, kept a portion, and granted the rest back to its own king as a fief.

Then, before he was allowed home, Shō Nei was made to sign. The oath survives in the Shimazu family papers, is designated a National Treasure, and is transcribed by the Historiographical In - stitute of the University of Tokyo, which notes that it was drawn between the nineteenth day of the ninth month, when the Fifteen Injunctions were presented, and the twenty-first, when his coun - cillors signed theirs. Its first article runs:

> 一、琉球之儀、自往古、爲薩州島津氏之附庸、依之、太守被讓其位之時者、嚴艤船、以奉祝焉、或時々以使者・使僧、獻陋邦之方物、其禮義終無怠矣。……因茲、球國被破却、且復、寄身於貴國上者、永止歸鄉之思、宛如鳥之在籠中。然處、家久公有御哀憐、匪啻遂歸鄉之志、割諸島、以錫我。

Article. As to the matter of Ryūkyū: from of old it has been a de - pendency of the Shimazu of Satsuma. Therefore, whenever the great lord succeeded to his position, we fitted out ships with all solemnity and offered our congratulation; and from time to time, by envoys and envoy-monks, we presented the products of our poor country, and in the end we were never negligent in these courtesies. ... On this account the country of Ryūkyū was broken; and further, having lodged my body in your honoured country, I long ceased from the thought of returning home, exactly as a bird is within a cage. Yet Lord Iehisa had compassion upon me: not only did he grant my wish to go home, he divided off the islands and bestowed the rest upon me.

The remaining articles bind his sons and grandsons to hand the oath down and never to forget the favour, and bind him never to transgress the ordinances laid down. It is sworn on Kumano paper and closes with the customary invocation of divine punishment for falsehood.

Read the tense before the content. The instrument does not say that Ryūkyū shall be a dependency of the Shimazu. It says that Ryūkyū has been one, from of old — a report of an existing condi - tion, in the indicative, of a kind that requires no act of creation be - cause it describes a fact already in the world. The conquest of 1609 is then not a conquest at all but the correction of a long delin - quency in courtesies that were always owed. And the return of the king to his own capital, minus the Amami islands, is written as a gift bestowed by the man who took them. One councillor, Jana Ueekata Rizan — known by his Chinese name Tei Dō, head of Kumemura, and the official who had refused Hideyoshi's demands twenty years earlier — declined to sign, and was beheaded; the reference literature gives the date as 24 October 1611.

The word doing the work is 附庸, fuyō, dependency. Note it. It has two hundred and sixty-one more years to run.

Why the king went back to Shuri

Satsuma had a completed conquest, an assessed tax base, a signed instrument of subordination, and a defeated royal house in its hands. It could have deposed the line and administered directly, as it did with Amami. It did the opposite, and the reason is not clemency.

A Chinese tributary licence attaches to an investitured king. Kill the king, abolish the kingdom, and the licence does not pass to the man holding the sword; it simply ceases, and the trade with it. Satsuma wanted the trade. So it kept the kingdom running — the royal line, the sessei and the Council of Three, the kingdom's own codes, its own taxation, its own court ritual — and inserted itself above the whole thing, invisibly.

The apparatus for doing so was very small. In 1628 Satsuma opened a resident magistracy at Naha, the zaiban bugyōsho, known locally as the great lodging. About twenty officials were in permanent residence — the magistrate, his deputies, an inspector — handling official business between the two governments and supervising trade. That establishment ran the arrangement for roughly two hundred and fifty years, over a population that was somewhere above a hundred thousand in the 1630s and around two hundred thousand by the middle of the eighteenth century.

What it bought was worth having. Ryūkyū's assessed yield went onto Satsuma's books: the figure conventionally cited for the domain, seven hundred and seventy thousand koku, is arrived at by subtracting the Ryūkyū portion — something over ninety thousand koku on the Kyōhō internal survey — from the domain's own assessment of eight hundred and sixty-seven thousand. Contemporary and modern figures for both the Ryūkyū assessment and the domain total vary, and are given here as the range they are; the direction is not in doubt. The kingdom's rice, cloth and standing were folded into a Japanese lord's rank while the kingdom went on presenting itself in Fuzhou as what it had been in 1429.

And that presentation had to be maintained, which is where most of the arrangement's running cost actually went. Ryūkyūan officials dealing with China were instructed to deny the connection with Japan. Japanese goods, dress, hairstyles and weapons were to be out of sight when investiture envoys were in the country; Satsuma's own supervising officer for those visits, the kansen bugyō, watched the proceedings from a distance rather than appearing at them. Directives of 1613 required annual instruction that Ryūkyū not revert to its pre-1609 appearance, and that its practices not diverge from Japanese forms; by the later eighteenth century the royal government was issuing standing instructions — travel regulations, orders on the reception of investiture ships, procedures for castaways — telling anyone who might meet a Chinese official exactly what to say. Watanabe Miki's work on the concealment policy, which is the standard treatment, argues that it did more than protect Satsuma's interest: it also held both masters at arm's length, since neither China nor Satsuma could reach directly into a relationship whose terms had to remain unspoken. That is a genuine complication of the simple reading, and it is worth carrying forward rather than flattening.

The concealment ran the other way as well, and more visibly. From 1634 the kingdom sent eighteen embassies to Edo, processions of five and six hundred people, with the Ryūkyūan party required to appear in Chinese dress. The point was not disguise but display: the shogun's standing was enhanced by receiving a foreign embassy, and Satsuma's along with it. So the same fiction was hidden in Fuzhou and paraded in Edo, and the labour of the arrangement was keeping the two audiences from comparing notes.

The men running it knew exactly what they had. In 1844 Shimazu Nariakira described the position to the senior councillor Abe Masahiro: Ryūkyū, he said, was dually dependent upon Japan and the Qing — outwardly subservient to the Qing, yet furtively following Japan. It is the earliest recorded use of the phrase that would afterwards be used to describe the whole two and a half centuries.

The country underneath

Above the ordinary population sat a hereditary order of some complexity: the royal house; princes and aji of the cadet branches; and below them the yukatchu, also called samuree, a scholar-official aristocracy whose precise rank was legible at a glance from the colour of a man's hat. They were concentrated in the four towns — Shuri, Naha, Kume and Tomari — against the magiri of the countryside. Kumemura supplied the Chinese learning; office was distributed partly by lineage and partly by examination on Confucian texts. The kingdom had, in short, exactly what the northern island Japan colonised ten years earlier did not: an educated, office-holding, self-reproducing native elite with a written record of its own.

What that order lived on had been transformed twice by imports. In 1605 an officer of a tribute ship, remembered as Noguni Sōkan, brought sweet potato cuttings back from Fujian; a district lord, Gima Shinjō, learned the cultivation from him and spread it, and a crop that tolerated typhoon and drought became the food of the islands. In 1623 the same Gima sent men to China to learn sugar refining. Sugar, sweet potato and bashōfu — banana-fibre cloth — are the economy Satsuma taxed, and sugar in particular is what made the Amami islands worth detaching outright.

Taxation ran differently in different parts of the kingdom, and the difference is the sharpest thing in the landscape. On Okinawa and the nearer islands the burden was assessed against the survey's koku. In Miyako and Yaeyama, the Sakishima group at the southern end of the chain, a separate system was imposed from 1637: a fixed assessment apportioned per head on every person aged fifteen to fifty, men paying in millet and women in fine ramie cloth, with four age bands and a grading of villages determining the amount, and groups of five households jointly liable for one another's default, the village liable if the group failed, and the whole island liable if the village failed. The fine cloth went north and sold at high prices as Satsuma ramie. A famine did not reduce the assessment, because the assessment was not on the harvest.

Two cautions attach. First, the standard Japanese term is not simply head tax but fixed-amount per-capita apportioned tax, and specialists — Sunakawa Genshō's work on the tribute millet under this system is the reference point — have questioned how far the head-tax framing is an artefact of the Meiji government's own survey of old fiscal custom rather than a description of the seventeenth-century instrument. Second, the popular tradition that a stone pillar at Hirara was used to measure children into liability, which Yanagita Kunio recorded in the 1920s and made famous, is not accepted by the local museums. What is not in doubt is that the system existed, that it fell on two island groups and not on the capital's own hinterland, and that it was still running in 1879.

One further thing about the country underneath: nobody knew how large it was. When the Meiji Ministry of Finance compiled its digest of the Ryūkyū domain in the mid-1870s, the household registers gave a total population of 166,782, and the figure stayed in the one-hundred-sixty-thousands in the statistics for several years. When the new prefecture ran its own count, the returns for 1880, published in 1882, gave a total above 350,000. Higa Yoshiyuki's demographic work on the period treats the discrepancy as the plain fact it is: the increase is not natural, and the earlier figures were defective. What Japan was handed in 1872, along with a kingdom, was a register that showed rather less than half a country.

The state that came for it

The Japan that took delivery of that register had existed for four years and had spent them dismantling itself.

Its founding statement, sworn by the Meiji emperor before the deities at the Shishinden on the fourteenth day of the third month of 1868, is five articles long. The fourth and fifth are the ones that bear:

> 一 舊來ノ陋習ヲ破リ天地ノ公道ニ基クヘシ 一 智識ヲ世界ニ求メ大ニ皇基ヲ振起スヘシ

The base customs of former times shall be broken, and all shall be founded on the just way of heaven and earth. Knowledge shall be sought throughout the world, and thereby the foundations of the imperial polity greatly strengthened.

The programme that followed was not rhetorical. In 1869 the domain lords surrendered their registers of land and people. In 1871 came the household registration law, entering the whole population in a uniform civil register; and in the seventh month of that year the abolition of the domains — the edict quoted at the head of this landscape, which removed two hundred and sixty-odd hereditary lordships in a single sentence and replaced them with three metropolitan prefectures and three hundred and two ordinary ones, consolidated within four months to seventy-two. Read its complaint again: some have the name but not the substance, and the purpose of the measure is to remove the evil of names without substance. This was, in 1871, the Japanese state's own account of what was wrong with the country it had inherited.

In the eighth month of 1872 came the school system, whose preamble is one of the clearest statements of intent any nineteenth-century government produced:

> 自今以後一般ノ人民華士族卒農工商及婦女子必ス邑ニ不學ノ戸ナク家ニ不學ノ人ナカラシメン事ヲ期ス

Henceforth, among the people generally — nobility, samurai, foot soldiers, farmers, artisans, merchants, and women and children alike — it is intended that there shall be no village with an unlearned household, and no household with an unlearned person.

In the eleventh month came the conscription proclamation, which abolished in a paragraph the thing the whole Tokugawa order had been built on:

> 世襲坐食ノ士ハ其祿ヲ減シ刀劍ヲ脱スルヲ許シ四民漸ク自由ノ權ヲ得セシメントス。是レ上下ヲ平均シ人權ヲ齊一ニスル道ニシテ、則チ兵農ヲ合一ニスル基ナリ。是ニ於テ士ハ從前ノ士ニ非ス、民ハ從前ノ民ニアラス、均シク皇國一般ノ民ニシテ、國ニ報スルノ道モ固ヨリ其別ナカルヘシ。

The hereditary samurai who eat without working shall have their stipends reduced and shall be permitted to lay aside their swords, so that the four classes may gradually obtain the right of liberty. This is the way to level high and low and to make the rights of per - sons uniform, and it is the foundation of uniting soldier and farm - er. Hence the samurai is not the samurai of before, and the com - moner is not the commoner of before: alike they are the general people of the imperial land, and in the manner of repaying the country there can be no distinction among them.

The same document, explaining the duty in terms borrowed from Europe, called military service the blood tax — ketsuzei, a literal rendering of the French impôt du sang — and glossed it as repaying the country with one's own living blood. Peasants who read that the government proposed to take their blood rose in a series of risings across western Japan that are still called the blood-tax riots, and the government was obliged to issue a plainer version. Land tax reform followed in 1873, converting the harvest levy into a money tax on assessed land value. Stipend commutation and the prohibition on wearing swords came in 1876.

Every one of these measures was resisted with arms by the class it dispossessed. Saga rose in 1874; Kumamoto, Akizuki and Hagi in 1876; and in 1877 Satsuma itself, under Saigō Takamori, in a rebel - lion that took the government eight months and roughly sixty thousand troops to put down. The figure usually given for the war's cost is about forty-one to forty-two million yen, against ordinary state expenditure that year of something like forty-eight million — that is, a second annual budget, met by printing inconvertible pa - per, with the inflation that followed running until Matsukata's de - flation from 1881. In May 1878 Ōkubo Toshimichi, the government's dominant figure, was assassinated in Tokyo by former samurai.

So the state that sent an official to Shuri in 1879 had no constitu - tion, no parliament, and no fixed rule of succession to its own leadership. It was governed by the Council of State, staffed by a small group of men from two of the domains it had abolished, and it had been forced two years earlier to spend a year's revenue put -

ting down an army raised by the domain that had held Ryūkyū for two and a half centuries. The movement for a national assembly had been petitioning since 1874, and would be answered in 1881 with a promise for 1890.

What the performance was for

None of the above was addressed only to Japanese. It had a second audience, and that audience held a lever.

Under the treaties of 1858, the Western powers enjoyed extraterritorial jurisdiction over their nationals on Japanese soil and a fixed tariff schedule Japan could not alter. The treaties provided for revision by agreement from 1872, and the mission led by Iwakura Tomomi to America and Europe in 1871–73 went in part to obtain it, and failed. The answer it received in Washington and in London was consistent: the powers would consider surrendering jurisdiction when Japanese law, courts and administration had been reformed to a standard they recognised. Extraterritoriality was not in fact ended until 1894, and full tariff autonomy not until 1911.

This is the position to hold in mind for everything that follows. In 1879 Japan was a state whose own sovereignty was incomplete on its own territory, whose programme of reform was in substantial part a demonstration staged for foreign observers who had told it that a demonstration was the price, and which had just spent a generation's revenue proving to itself that it could hold its own periphery by force. It was, at the same moment, acquiring a periphery.

The instruments by which it did so used the vocabulary of the old order to satisfy the new one. In 1871 Japan concluded a treaty of amity with the Qing, the first roughly equal treaty either state had signed. In the tenth month of that year a Miyako tribute vessel was driven onto the southern coast of Taiwan and fifty-four of its people were killed. When Japan raised the matter, the Qing authorities answered that the aborigines of that coast were beyond the reach of civilisation and not their responsibility — and Japan, in 1874,

landed some three and a half thousand men there and made it their business. The settlement negotiated at Peking on 31 October 1874, under British mediation, contains the sentence that mattered:

> 茲ニ臺灣生蕃曾テ日本國ノ屬民等ヲ將テ、妄リニ害ヲ加フルコトヲ爲スヲ以テ……

Whereas the aborigines of Taiwan did formerly take subjects belonging to Japan and wantonly inflict harm upon them …

and, in its first article, that what Japan had done arose from a righteous act to protect its people, which China did not hold to be improper. China paid a hundred thousand taels to the families of the dead and four hundred thousand for the roads and buildings the Japanese force left behind.

Japan read subjects belonging to Japan — 屬民 — as the Qing court conceding that Ryūkyūans were Japanese. The Qing read it as referring to a separate group of castaways from Oda prefecture who had been robbed on the same coast. Nothing in the document decides between the two readings, and nothing in it mentions Ryūkyū.

Three documents, then, over two hundred and sixty-three years, and one grammar. In 1611 Shō Nei was made to write that his country had always been fuyō, a dependency, of the Shimazu. In 1872 an imperial decree would recite that Ryūkyū had for generations been fuyō of Satsuma. In 1874 a treaty with China would call Ryūkyūans zokumin, dependent people, of Japan. Each instrument reports a condition rather than creating one, and each takes its warrant from the one before it.

The last kingdom, and the first new domain

In the seventh month of 1872 the royal government at Shuri, at Japan's request, sent Prince Ie and the ueekata of Ginowan to Tokyo to congratulate the emperor on the Restoration. On the fourteenth

day of the ninth month — 16 October 1872 — the envoys received, on their absent king's behalf, an imperial decree:

> 朕上天ノ景命ニ膺リ、萬世一系ノ帝祚ヲ紹キ、奄ニ四海ヲ有チ、八荒ニ君臨ス。今琉球近ク南服ニ在リ、氣類相同ク、言文殊ナル無ク、世々薩摩ノ附庸タリ。而シテ爾尚泰能ク勤誠ヲ致ス、宜ク顯爵ヲ予フヘシ。陞シテ琉球藩王ト爲シ、叙シテ華族ニ列ス。

We, answering the great mandate of high heaven, succeeding to the imperial throne of a line unbroken through ten thousand genera - tions, possessing all within the four seas and reigning over the eight quarters — now Ryūkyū lies near, within the southern zone of ser - vice; its kind and nature are the same, its speech and writing are not different, and for generations it has been a dependency of Sat - suma. And you, Shō Tai, have rendered diligent loyalty; it is fitting that a distinguished rank be conferred. We raise you to be King of the Domain of Ryūkyū, and enrol you among the nobility.

Four things are worth reading slowly. The decree places Ryūkyū in the nanpuku, the southern zone of service — a term from the Chinese scheme of concentric zones of submission around an im - perial capital, deployed by a Japanese emperor at the precise mo - ment of detaching Ryūkyū from the Chinese world order. It asserts that the two peoples are of one kind and that their speech and writing do not differ, of a people whose language a Japanese official could not follow. It grounds the whole act on the word extracted at Kagoshima in 1611. And it creates a domain — a han — fourteen months after the last domain in Japan had been abolished, with a title, han-ō, domain king, which had never existed in the Japanese state and would never be used for anyone else.

The government of a state whose founding administrative doc - trine was that name and substance must correspond had brought into being one new name whose substance was to be settled later.

A month afterwards, on 20 October 1872, the American minister at Tokyo, Charles De Long, wrote to the foreign minister Soejima Taneomi to ask whether the compact signed between the Kingdom of Lew Chew and the United States on 11 July 1854 would still be

observed. Soejima answered that Lew Chew being an integral portion of the Japanese Empire, it was natural that the compact's provisions would be observed by his government. Ryūkyū had signed that agreement in its own name, and two more like it with France in 1855 and the Netherlands in 1859; the United States government's own record of its foreign relations describes the 1854 compact as an act of mutual recognition with an independent kingdom. Shō Tai, meanwhile, went on dispatching tribute to the Qing, and would until forbidden in 1875.

At Naha, the building that housed all of this did not change. The resident magistracy Satsuma opened in 1628 became, in 1872, a branch office of the Foreign Ministry; then a branch office of the Home Ministry; then in 1879 the provisional prefectural office; and from 1881 the office of the Governor of Okinawa Prefecture, which it remained until 1920. Three sovereignties, one address, and about twenty men in it at a time for most of two and a half centuries.

Reading the Ryūkyūs against the framework

Three things this landscape establishes, and one refinement it suggests, which the modules that follow are here to break or confirm.

There is no aboriginal order here, and saying so is not a demotion. The kingdom the Meiji state abolished was itself the product of a conquest in 1429 and a palace coup in 1469, ruled by a line whose surname was a Chinese emperor's gift, holding a throne whose kingship had been in significant part manufactured by an external power's act of recognition in 1372, and running a national priesthood that a king had assembled in the 1470s out of local authority that had never previously pooled. By 1879 all of it had been in place for four hundred years, which is long enough that nobody living inside it experienced any of it as built. That is the ordinary result when a build takes, and it makes the order more real rather than less. What it forecloses is the appeal to an innocent condition

before the taking, and the study will not make that appeal in either direction.

A conqueror inherits a predecessor's blind spots along with his apparatus. The register handed to Tokyo showed 166,782 people; the count taken by Tokyo's own officials showed above 350,000. Whatever the mechanism — undercounting in the tributary islands, exemptions, the survey's fiscal purpose diverging from a demographic one — the operative fact is that the machine Satsuma had run for two hundred and fifty years, and Japan proposed to run next, could not see half the people it taxed. That is worth carrying into the modules on settlement and extraction, because an administration is only as legible as the instrument it inherits, and the instrument here had been designed to satisfy a lord in Kagoshima rather than to describe a country.

And the refinement, offered as a hypothesis rather than a finding. The framework's central fork asks whether a defeated order left a seizable apex — an office a stranger can enter and operate. Ryūkyū in 1609 was as clean a case of a seizable apex as the corpus has met: a throne, a council, a survey-able tax base, a hierarchy of appointed officials, a national priesthood, and a bureaucracy accustomed to obeying whoever sat at Shuri. Satsuma took it and did not sit in it. It surveyed the kingdom, granted the kingdom back to its own king as a fief, extracted a document saying the arrangement had always existed, put twenty men in a house at Naha, and left the incumbent on the seat for two hundred and sixty-eight more years.

The reason is not on the chair. It is on what the chair was for. The value of that apex lay in a licence issued by a third party — the Ming and then the Qing court — to a specific investitured person, and that licence was not transferable by force, because the party issuing it could not be reached by Satsuma's ships. So the question a conqueror faces is not only can I sit in this seat but is the seat worth more with me in it or with him in it and me above him — and where the seat's value depends on recognition by a power the conqueror cannot coerce, the second answer is the only one available. He does not assume the chair. He rents it, and the rent is paid in the per-

manent, expensive labour of maintaining a fiction in front of an audience that must never be allowed to check.

If that holds, two things follow that the modules can test. The first is that the arrangement's characteristic cost is not garrison but concealment — the travel regulations, the scripted denials, the magistrate watching an investiture ceremony from another room, the embassy dressed in Chinese clothes for a Japanese crowd. The second is that such an arrangement has a termination condition written into it from the start: it lasts exactly as long as the third party is worth trading through, and no longer. What happened between 1872 and 1879 is the test of that proposition, and it is where the next module begins.

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A note on sources. Quoted exactly, in the original with translation: the inscription of the Shuri Castle bell of 1458, as reproduced in Japanese documentary and reference sources that give the classical text in full; King Shō Nei's oath of the ninth month of Keichō 16, from the transcription published by the Historiographical Institute of the University of Tokyo from the Shimazu family documents (Shimazu-ke monjo 5-7, designated a National Treasure), together with that Institute's dating note; the Charter Oath of 1868; the edict abolishing the domains of the fourteenth day of the seventh month of Meiji 4, and the decree of the fourteenth day of the ninth month of Meiji 5 raising Shō Tai to King of the Domain of Ryūkyū, both from the texts in the Hōrei zensho as reproduced on Japanese Wikisource; the preamble to the School System Ordinance of 1872 and the conscription proclamation of the twenty-eighth day of the eleventh month of Meiji 5, from the texts held by the National Archives of Japan and the Japan Center for Asian Historical Records; and the Sino-Japanese exchanged articles of 31 October 1874, from the translation printed in Kyū jōyaku isan and reproduced in the "World and Japan" database of the National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies and the University of Tokyo Institute for Advanced Studies on Asia.

Paraphrased from modern scholarship, briefly and with credit: Akamine Mamoru on the 1372 embassy and the kingdom's tributary trade, in Robert Huey's edition of The Ryukyu Kingdom: Cornerstone of East Asia; Gregory Smits on the limits of Satto's actual control and on the external forces

shaping the early kingdom; Watanabe Miki's Kinsei Ryūkyū to Chū-Nichi kankei on the concealment policy and its double function, with Kamiya Nobuyuki's earlier work on Ryukyuan control under the shogunal-domain system; Higa Yoshiyuki on the demographic discontinuity across 1879; and Sunakawa Genshō on the tribute millet under the Sakishima assessment, whose caution about the "head tax" framing as partly an artefact of the Meiji survey of old fiscal custom is followed here.

Seen only at one remove and flagged as such: the eleven items of the Momourasoe rankan no mei of 1509, whose classical text this study has not reached and which is given as reported in Japanese reference sources; the content of the Fifteen Injunctions of 1611, for which summaries rather than a verified full text were available; and the exchange between De Long and Soejima of October 1872, quoted from an English-language legal ref - erence work rather than from the diplomatic record itself.

Contested figures are given as ranges or with their variants. The 1611 survey figure of 89,086 koku is as recorded, with the later correction to 83,085 noted; the Ryūkyū component of Satsuma's assessment is variously given between about ninety and about one hundred and ten thousand koku and the domain's own totals differ between surveys. Population fig - ures before 1880 are unreliable for the reasons stated in the text. The cost of the Satsuma Rebellion is given at forty-one to forty-two million yen against ordinary expenditure of roughly forty-eight million, which is the range in the standard Japanese accounts. Invasion strengths for 1609 are given as the standard accounts report them and have not been verified against a muster roll.

One caution particular to this case. The status of the Ryūkyū Kingdom before 1879 is a live argument in which the People's Republic of China has a present interest, and there is material in Chinese, Japanese and English written to serve current positions. Where this landscape rests on a claim that bears on that argument — the meaning of fuyō and zokumin, the treaties of 1854, 1855 and 1859, the reading of the 1874 articles — it quotes the instrument and reports both readings rather than choosing between them.

MODULE 1

THE GATES THAT WOULD NOT OPEN

Module 1 — the floor of force, 1872–1898: how much organised violence Japan applied to take the Ryūkyūs, why so little was needed, where it was actually pointed, and the four weeks in which it was used

A case study in the Patterns of Power series · Thomas J. Bryan with Claude (Anthropic) · held as tested, not revealed

Fourteen words, and a proviso

The instrument that ended the Ryūkyū Kingdom is the shortest document in this study. Proclamation No. 14 of the Council of State, dated 4 April 1879, runs in full:

> 琉球藩ヲ廢シ更ニ沖縄縣ヲ被置候條此旨布告候事 但縣廳ハ首里ニ被置候事

The Domain of Ryūkyū is abolished and Okinawa Prefecture is established in its place; this is proclaimed accordingly. Provided that the prefectural office shall be placed at Shuri.

The proviso did not survive contact with the ground. The prefectural office could not be established at Shuri, because the army was quartered in the castle and there was no site for a civil administration. The government of the new prefecture operated instead from Naha, and by imperial proclamation the following year the seat was formally moved there — into the building on the Naha waterfront that Satsuma's resident magistracy had occupied since 1628, which had become a Foreign Ministry branch office in 1872, a Home Ministry branch office after that, and a provisional prefectural office in 1879.

That is the whole module in miniature. The instrument was fourteen words and its only substantive provision failed because soldiers were standing in the room.

The force, counted

The party that took Shuri is documented to the man. Matsuda Michiyuki, senior secretary of the Home Ministry, sailed for his third mission with forty-one civil officials — thirty-two of the Home Ministry and nine others — something over a hundred and sixty police officers and constables, and a detachment of the Kumamoto garrison. Accounts of the garrison detachment's strength differ: the Okinawa Prefectural Archives gives four hundred; the reference literature commonly gives three hundred or "three hundred and more"; the round figure usually cited for the whole party is about six hundred. He reached Naha on 25 March 1879.

On 27 March he read the order at Shuri Castle. It abolished the domain, established the prefecture, required the surrender of the castle by the end of the month, required the transfer of the land, the people and the records, and required the former domain king to reside in Tokyo. Shō Tai was ill and did not receive it in person; the notification was made to Prince Nakijin. On 31 March the castle was surrendered, and Matsuda's party walked into it. Nobody fired.

Set that against the ground it took. The prefecture's own count of its population, taken the following year and published in 1882, ran above three hundred and fifty thousand. So the arithmetic of the founding act is roughly six hundred armed and official men against a country of a third of a million, applied for four days, with no cas - ualties, no engagement, and no arrests. There is no other conquest in this collection that is cheap in that way at the moment of taking.

There is a further nicety about the man who did it. Shobunkan — disposition officer, the title Matsuda held — was not an office in the Japanese establishment. It was a designation given to him for the convenience of the task. The kingdom was abolished by an official holding a post that did not exist, under a word, shobun, drawn

from the vocabulary of administrative law, where it means the disposal of a matter within a jurisdiction. The choice of that word is the first fact of the module, because it settles in advance what kind of act this was going to be recorded as. An annexation is something a state does to another state, and it is heard abroad. A disposition is something a state does to itself.

Why so little was needed

The Japanese force met no armed resistance because there was, in any organised sense, nothing to resist with, and the reason for that lies three and a half centuries back in the kingdom's own history.

The scholarship on the resistance movement is unanimous and blunt on this point. Itō Akio's study of the disposition and the救国 movement, and Kokuba Kōtarō's history of Okinawa, both make it a premise rather than a conclusion: because of the sword-gathering of Shō Shin's reign, neither the shizoku nor the common people held arms, the kingdom fielded no standing military force, and armed resistance was consequently out of reach. Attempts at a rising were contemplated and were not practicable. The disarmament that made the taking of 1879 free was performed by a Ryūkyūan king in the early sixteenth century, for reasons entirely to do with holding down his own aji, and then confirmed and extended by Satsuma after 1609, which forbade the shizoku to carry weapons while allowing families to retain firearms already in their possession.

So the conqueror of 1879 walked onto ground that had been disarmed twice, by two earlier consolidations, neither of which had anything to do with him. He paid nothing for it. He did not have to conduct a sword hunt, disband an army, reduce a fortress, or garrison a countryside against men who knew how to use a weapon, because three hundred and seventy years of somebody else's state-building had already removed the capacity.

Two things follow, and the second is the one worth carrying. The first is the obvious one: an inherited disarmament is the cheapest

item there is, and a conqueror who arrives after another man's sword hunt gets the whole benefit and appears in the record as having applied almost no force. The second is that the quiet he inherits is not evidence about him. It measures the completeness of an earlier consolidation, and it will be reported home — sincerely — as the absence of opposition.

The floor was assembled in pieces, and most of the pieces were paper

The four days in March are not where the force actually went in. They are the last instalment of a seven-year sequence in which each piece was administrative and cumulatively they removed everything a state uses to defend itself.

In the tenth month of 1872, sixteen days after the decree that made Shō Tai a domain king, the conduct of Ryūkyū's treaties and foreign business was transferred to the Japanese Foreign Ministry, and Satsuma's resident magistracy at Naha was abolished and replaced by a Foreign Ministry branch office. In 1874 the originals of the kingdom's three treaties — with the United States of 1854, France of 1855 and the Netherlands of 1859 — were surrendered to the Japanese government. In July of that year responsibility for Ryūkyūan affairs moved again, from the Foreign Ministry to the Home Ministry, which is the administrative moment at which the file stopped being foreign.

In May 1876 the Japanese side took over judicial authority and the policing of persons from other prefectures, while leaving the policing of Ryūkyūans to the royal government's own office, the hirajō. That is worth pausing on: for three years the conqueror held the courts and policed his own nationals, and left the conquered to be policed by their own king's men. The rest followed in the same manner — travel to China made subject to a passport issued by the Japanese government, and, in 1877, Ryūkyūan judicial business placed under the appellate court at Osaka, a step this study has

seen reported in the reference literature rather than in the statute and gives with that caution.

The soldiers came into it in the same incremental way. In May 1875 the government resolved to establish a Kumamoto garrison detachment for Okinawa — the stated ground, in the Prefectural Archives' rendering of the decision, being for protection within the domain. The detachment was sent in July 1876. Barracks were fin - ished near Naha harbour that September, on the ground where a primary school now stands, and the establishment placed in them was twenty-five men.

Twenty-five soldiers, for three years, over a kingdom of a third of a million people. That is the entire standing military presence Ja - pan maintained in the Ryūkyūs from 1876 until the disposition, and it is almost exactly the establishment Satsuma had kept in the same town for the preceding two and a half centuries. The successor ar - rived at the same figure independently, because it was answering the same question: how many men does it take to sit on top of a machine that is already running.

Where the violence was actually pointed

Very little was aimed at Ryūkyūans, and a great deal was expended in the same years on other people. Both halves matter.

The military operation that established Japan's claim was fought in Taiwan. In 1874, on the ground that fifty-four Miyako islanders had been killed on the southern Taiwanese coast three years earlier, Japan landed a force of some three thousand six hundred and fifty men against the Paiwan villages of the interior. Twelve of them were killed in action and about five hundred and sixty-one died of disease. The settlement negotiated at Peking that October is the document Japan afterwards treated as international recognition that Ryūkyūans were its subjects. So the expedition that acquired the title was fought against a third people entirely, and the Ryūkyūans in whose name it was launched were neither consulted nor present.

The larger expenditure was domestic. From February to September 1877 the Japanese state fought the Satsuma Rebellion, committing something like sixty thousand troops and spending forty-one to forty-two million yen — a figure of the same order as the whole of that year's ordinary expenditure — met by printing paper money, at the cost of the inflation that followed. Ōkubo Toshimichi, who had directed the Ryūkyū policy, was assassinated the following May.

Lay the two chronologies side by side. Matsuda made his first mission in July 1875 and returned to Tokyo in September recommending forcible disposition and a garrison. Then the file goes quiet. The Tokyo envoys are ordered to leave in May 1876, travel to China is restricted in June, and after that almost nothing happens on the Ryūkyū question until the Qing minister's protest in September 1878 and Matsuda's own disposition plan submitted to Itō Hirobumi that November. The gap is 1877, and 1877 is the year the state was fighting its own former samurai in Kyushu. The seed of this study asked what the conqueror could afford. In this case the answer is legible in the calendar: the taking of the Ryūkyūs was scheduled around a civil war, and the three years in which nothing was done to Shuri are the years in which the government had no attention and no money to spend on it.

And the six hundred men of March 1879 had an audience that was not on the island. The Qing had a minister in Tokyo who had protested formally the previous September; Ryūkyūan officials had been petitioning the American, French, British and Dutch legations, using the 1854, 1855 and 1859 treaties as evidence that the kingdom was a party in its own right; Grant would be invited to mediate within weeks. A force that is not needed to overcome resistance is being spent on something, and what it was being spent on here was the demonstration that the thing had been done and could not be undone by negotiation.

The gates that would not open

And then, in the summer, the state discovered what it actually had to fight.

The Ryūkyūan leadership responded to the disposition with a petition refusing incorporation, carrying fifty-three signatures including representatives of the shizoku. They then did something more effective. They drew up an undertaking that anyone who took office under the Japanese would be beheaded, and carried the call for solidarity down through the magiri and the outer islands, where local and island officials in turn had the ordinary people set their seals in blood to documents pledging not to cooperate with the Japanese. The result, in the phrase of the scholarship, is that offices across the territory could not open their gates.

That is the actual resistance, and it is worth being precise about its character. It was not a rising. It was the withdrawal of the clerical class from the machine — an administrative strike by the people who knew where the registers were, who could collect a tax, who could tell a village what had been decided. The apparatus Japan had taken over intact in March was, by July, an apparatus that would not run.

The floor came down in August. Governor Nabeshima Naoyoshi began arresting officials, beginning with the hardliners of the party that stood for the restoration of the kingdom. Within a month, on Kokuba's account, something in the region of a hundred men were held in cells, from councillors of the rank of sanshikan down to junior officials of the outlying islands. They were bound at both wrists, hung from a beam, and beaten with rods; the sound carried, on that account, several hundred metres. Separately, and earlier, the first recorded death under interrogation had occurred in June, in connection with the new power to punish unauthorised travel to the Qing — a power the Japanese authorities had not possessed before the disposition, since until March they could stop a ship but could not arrest the man aboard it.

It worked in four weeks. On 14 September the Ryūkyūan leadership submitted to the prefectural office a pledge of obedience together with a request for the release of the men in custody. On 22 September Urasoe Chōshō and Tomikawa Seikei — two of the three councillors who had refused Matsuda in 1875 — were appointed to the eighth grade of the Japanese civil service and made advisers to the prefectural government. On 24 September the prefecture's police headquarters was formally constituted.

Read the sequence in the order it happened. The conquest was free; the administration was not; the beatings fell not on soldiers or peasants but on the men who held the registers; and the thing that ended the resistance was not a defeat but an appointment. Within ten days of the arrests ending, the senior men of the abolished government were sitting inside the new one.

The killing at Miyako, and the order of events

One person was killed in the immediate aftermath of the disposition, and it was not by the Japanese.

In July 1879, on Miyako, a former shizoku named Shimoji Nya Risha, employed as an interpreter at the police substation, was killed by a crowd and his body thrown into a limestone cave on the Koshibara ridge; police recovered it and had it buried at Gokoku-ji in Naha. He had signed the blood-seal undertaking not to obey the Japanese and had then gone to work for them. The name the incident carries — Sanshī — is the Okinawan pronunciation of the word for assent, and it was what he was called for having assented.

The Japanese reference literature commonly reports that this killing was one of the reasons the government felt obliged to conciliate the old ruling class by preserving the kingdom's institutions. The chronology does not support that as stated. The prefecture's basic administrative policy, retaining the old customs, was promulgated on 25 June 1879, some weeks before Shimoji was killed. The killing cannot have produced a policy already in force. What it

can have done — and what the record will bear — is confirm to men in Naha and Tokyo that the decision already taken was the correct one.

The law they reached for in 1885

The instrument the prefecture eventually used against the flight to China is the strangest single item in this module.

Men continued to leave for Fuzhou to petition the Qing court; the flow peaked in the mid-1880s, and of thirty-one petitions eventually submitted to the Qing government, twenty-eight fall between 1879 and 1885. The prefecture had detained returnees in the earliest years, stopped detaining them around 1882, and for a period did no more than question them. In 1885 Governor Nishimura Sutezō pressed for a punishment, and got one: part of the Ryūkyū Kingdom's own penal code was revived, prescribing imprisonment of up to five hundred days for unauthorised travel to the Qing. In 1886 the scope was widened from travel to anti-government activity generally, with economic sanctions and controls on assembly attached. In 1889 the amnesty issued on the promulgation of the imperial constitution suspended the whole apparatus.

A Japanese governor, in a Japanese prefecture, punishing Japanese subjects for going to China, under a statute of the kingdom Japan had abolished six years earlier. The reason is not obscure — the kingdom's own law was what was in force there, and using it saved the trouble of extending a Japanese one — but the shape of the thing should be recorded exactly: the conquered order's law was kept running and turned against the conquered order's loyalists.

Nineteen years before they were armed

The last measure of a floor is what the state is prepared to put into the hands of the people beneath it, and here the figure is nineteen years.

Conscription was law in Japan from 1873. It was not extended to Okinawa Prefecture until 1898, and not to the Sakishima islands until 1902, or on some accounts 1904 — the same lag applying, for comparable reasons, to Hokkaidō and the Ogasawara islands, which waited until 1887. The consequence is exact and easily stated: every Okinawan who served in the war against China in 1894 and 1895 did so as a volunteer, because there was no other way for an Okinawan to be a Japanese soldier. The first ten had gone in 1890, joining the army's instruction corps of their own motion. A partial provision, the six-week short-service scheme for normal-school graduates teaching in elementary schools, was introduced in 1896.

When the levy did arrive it was resisted in the ordinary ways. The Ryūkyū Shimpō of 27 April 1898 reported sentences passed on men who had broken the conscription law; a despatch from Kunigami printed on 11 October that year noted, alongside the good results of the preparatory instruction, that not a few conscripts were cutting off the katakashira, the topknot worn by adult Ryūkyūan men. Others left. The old Ryūkyū residence at Fuzhou, which had been the kingdom's trading and diplomatic house in China, became a base for men avoiding the draft and for their business, and remained one until 1937.

A state that will not conscript a population for nineteen years after annexing it has made a judgement about that population, and the judgement is not a secret: it is written in the gap. What the gap does not tell you by itself is which judgement — that the population is untrustworthy, or that it is not yet Japanese enough to be asked, or that the cost of the machinery is not worth the recruits. The modules that follow will have to settle that. What belongs here is only the arithmetic: for the first nineteen years of the prefecture, the state held the whole of the organised violence and shared none of it.

Reading the floor against the framework

Three things this case does to the framework's account of founding force.

The founding act of force can be almost nothing, and the module is still about force. The corpus has generally found the floor where it expects it — at a battle, a bombardment, a punitive column — and measured it in men and dead. Here the founding act cost nothing at all: six hundred men, four days, no shots, no casualties, a castle handed over. If the study stopped at March it would report one of the gentlest annexations in the collection, and it would be wrong, because the expenditure came four months later and fell somewhere the instruments are not pointed. **Where a conqueror takes over a functioning administration rather than a functioning army, the cost of the conquest migrates from the battlefield to the registry, and its measure is not casualties but the number of officials who had to be made to sign.** A hundred men in cells in one August is the correct figure for this conquest, and no casualty count would have found it.

An inherited disarmament is the cheapest item on the menu, and it flatters whoever arrives last. The reason the taking was free is that the weapons had been gathered to Shuri in the early sixteenth century by a Ryūkyūan king consolidating his own country, and the shizoku forbidden arms by Satsuma after 1609. Japan paid for none of that and received the whole benefit of it. The framework already holds that a conqueror can inherit a quiet he did not earn and report it home as consent to himself; this case adds the sharper form of the same point, which is that he can inherit the incapacity as well, and that an order which has already been disarmed twice will produce a conquest whose paper record contains no violence at all.

And the pacing of a conquest is set by what the metropole can afford that year. The demand was made in July 1875, the plan recommended in September 1875, and the act performed in March 1879, with the intervening silence falling almost exactly across the

year in which the Japanese state spent a year's revenue and sixty thousand men putting down a rebellion in Kyushu. The framework asks what a conqueror could afford. The answer is not only a quantity but a schedule, and a delay of three and a half years between the decision and the execution should be read first against the metropole's own accounts before it is read as hesitation, restraint, or a change of mind.

One further thing the module leaves open. The whole operation rested on the proposition that the machinery would keep running under a new master, and in the event it did — but only after a month of beatings and only once the men who had refused in 1875 were given eighth-grade appointments in the government that had abolished theirs. What those men were bought with, and what the arrangement they entered cost the people below them, is the settlement, and it is the next thing to establish.

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A note on sources. Quoted exactly, in the original with translation: Council of State Proclamation No. 14 of 4 April 1879 abolishing the Domain of Ryūkyū and establishing Okinawa Prefecture, from the draft and promulgated text held in the Kōbunroku at the National Archives of Japan and reproduced by the Japan Center for Asian Historical Records (Ref. A01100178700). The transfer of the prefectural seat to Naha the following year was made by Council of State Proclamation No. 32 of Meiji 13.

Drawn from the documentary chronology compiled by the Ryūkyū Kingdom Exchange History and Modern Okinawa Historical Materials Di - gital Archive, and checked where possible against the Okinawa Prefectural Archives: the dates and sequence of the transfer of Ryūkyūan affairs from the Foreign Ministry to the Home Ministry, the abolition of the Satsuma magistracy, the surrender of the three treaties' originals, the decision of 7 May 1875 to establish the Kumamoto garrison detachment, Matsuda's three missions and the six-article order of 14 July 1875, the promulgation of the prefecture's basic administrative policy on 25 June 1879, and the negoti - ations over partition from 1880. The Okinawa Prefectural Archives sup - plies the strength of Matsuda's 1879 party at four hundred soldiers and a hundred and sixty police, the wording of the 1875 decision as being for protection within the domain, and the location of the detachment's quar -

ters; the reference literature commonly gives the troops as three hundred or a little more, and both figures are reported here rather than reconciled.

Paraphrased from modern scholarship, briefly and with credit: Itō Akio's 1987 study of the disposition and the salvation movement, and Kokuba Kōtarō's Okinawa no ayumi in the 2019 Iwanami edition, on the impossibility of armed resistance after the sixteenth-century disarmament and on the arrests and interrogations of August 1879; Lim John Chuan-tiong's 2003 study on the fifty-three-signature petition, the non-cooperation movement and its collapse in September 1879; and Shiitada Atsushi's 2010 monograph on the movement for the first death under interrogation in June 1879, the revival of the kingdom's own penal code under Governor Nishimura in 1885, its extension in 1886, and the 1889 amnesty. The figure of roughly a hundred detained, the method of interrogation and the carrying of the sound are as Kokuba reports them and have not been checked against the prefectural records themselves.

Seen only at one remove and flagged as such: the placing of Ryūkyūan judicial business under the Osaka appellate court in 1877 and the passport requirement for travel to China, which this study has met in encyclopedic sources of uneven quality rather than in the enactments; and the account of the Sanshī incident, which rests on the Miyakojima city education board's and the Ryūkyū Shimpō reference entries.

Figures given as reported or as ranges: the strength of the March 1879 party; the Taiwan expedition at three thousand six hundred and fifty-eight men with twelve combat dead and about five hundred and sixty-one dead of disease, from the standard Japanese reference works; the cost of the Satsuma Rebellion at forty-one to forty-two million yen against ordinary expenditure of roughly forty-eight million; the extension of conscription to the Sakishima islands, given variously as 1902 and 1904.

Matsuda Michiyuki's own three-volume compilation Ryūkyū shobun (1879) and Kishaba Chōken's Ryūkyū kenbunroku (1914) are the two indispensable primary accounts of the disposition from the Japanese and the Ryūkyūan sides respectively. Neither has been read directly for this module; a draft portion of Matsuda's work survives in the University of the Ryukyus digital archive and is being transcribed, and both should be consulted before any later module rests on the negotiations of 1875 and 1879 in detail.

MODULE 2

THE STATE'S GROUND, THE PEOPLE'S TREES

Module 2 — the settlement, 1879–1909: what the instruments found, why the old order was kept for twenty years and then dissolved in four, who was made an owner, who was made a marquis, who got the forest, and where the drafting came from

A case study in the Patterns of Power series · Thomas J. Bryan with Claude (Anthropic) · held as tested, not revealed

What there was to divide

The surveyors who came south in 1899 found a countryside in which nobody owned anything.

The system they had to dissolve is called jiwari, and it is peculiar to the Ryūkyūs. Arable ground belonged to the village, and the village periodically redistributed it among the households en - titled to a share, by lot and by agreement, according to grades of soil and a reckoning of what each portion was expected to yield. A household worked the plot it had drawn until the next redistribu - tion, and then drew again. The origin of the system is disputed — some scholars place it in the old kingdom, some in the seventeenth century — and it is documented from the early eighteenth. What is not in dispute is that under it a farmer held no estate. He held a turn.

Above and beside the jiwari fields ran a set of holdings that were not fields at all but offices with land attached. There was jitō land, held by the aji and senior officials whose income was the tribute drawn from a district; there was oeka land and norokumoi land, which were the service holdings of the women who conducted the local rites — a priestess's plot, held because she was the priestess of

that grove and not otherwise; there was jōnō paddy, whose crop went to the government; there were reclaimed lands under several names, some of which permitted a form of private holding to commoners or to shizoku who had opened them; and there was somayama, the forest, held in common by the villages that used it, protected and cut and replanted under corvée labour, and supplying timber, fuel and the material of ordinary life.

None of this was a thing. A jitō's land was his standing in the kingdom's officialdom; a noro's land was her office at a particular utaki; a farmer's plot was his membership of a village that redistributed. There was no register of owners, no mortgage, no sale, and no instrument that could be handed over, because in each case what would have had to be handed over was a person's place among other persons.

That is the object. Everything that follows is the operation of converting it into something a register could hold.

The first decision was not to make a settlement

The most important document of the settlement was written before the annexation and it is a recommendation to do nothing.

In March 1879, drafting the outline of the disposition on the instructions of the Home Minister Itō Hirobumi, Matsuda Michiyuki laid down that certain things must be avoided in Okinawa. On the account of Gotō Arata, whose study of the first years of the prefecture is the best work on the point, Matsuda's outline named specifically the abolition of the shizoku stipends, the reduction of temple lands, and intervention in forest administration — and said that these should be avoided because they were the road that had led, on the mainland, from the abolition of the domains to the samurai rebellions. Reform in Okinawa should go no further than improving the old rules of its political society.

Read what that sentence is. It is the Japanese state, two years after spending a year's revenue and sixty thousand men suppress-

ing an armed rising of dispossessed samurai in Kyushu, writing down in advance that it will not do to the Ryūkyūan aristocracy what it did to its own. The stipend commutation of 1876, which turned hereditary income into a lump of bonds, was one of the immediate provocations of the war of 1877. In 1879 the government declined to repeat it, and the reason is on the file.

The prefecture's basic administrative policy, promulgated on 25 June 1879, gave that decision its permanent form. The kingdom's land system, its taxation, its local administration through the magiri and the island kuramoto, and its ranking of persons were all to be retained. The name the policy carries — kyūkan onzon, the preservation of old customs — has an odd sound beside the Charter Oath of 1868, whose fourth article had sworn that the base customs of former times should be broken and all be founded on the just way of heaven and earth. The two words are not the same word and the resonance should not be pushed. But the same government, in the same generation, undertook to break the old customs at home and to preserve them here, and the difference had reasons that the record states.

Three of them are on the page. The Qing were protesting and a negotiation over the islands' status was about to open, so any disturbance in Okinawa would be read in Peking. The shizoku were refusing to cooperate and the government had just had to beat about a hundred of them in cells to get the offices working. And the memory of 1877 was two years old. Officials in Tokyo intended at first to have mainland ordinances in force by 1885. It took until 1903.

What the elite kept

The settlement of the upper class, when it came, was not a commutation but a confirmation, and it is the most conservative arrangement any conqueror in this collection made with a defeated aristocracy.

The rule adopted for the senior shizoku, as Gotō renders it, was that those of heavy merit should have both a house stipend and a territory, and those of lesser merit a territory: that is, fiefs continued to be granted, and their holders continued to receive the annual tribute from them. He calls it, correctly, the preservation of feudalism itself. Only one restriction was placed on it — no perpetual stipends were created — and the practical difficulty was not principle but paperwork, since with the royal government gone the prefecture could not readily establish which families were entitled to what. Shizoku serving as local officials in the countryside kept their exemption from taxation.

The royal house went to Tokyo and into the Japanese peerage. Shō Tai was created a marquis under the Peerage Ordinance on 2 May 1885, took a seat in the House of Peers on its opening in 1890, was allowed one visit home between August 1884 and March the following year, and died at his Tokyo house in 1901. Two other lines of the royal kindred, the Ie and the Nakijin, were ennobled with him. His second and fourth sons returned to Okinawa in later life.

And below the confirmed class there was a class that received nothing at all. The unstipended shizoku — the chikudun and those beneath them, the great mass of the kingdom's minor officialdom — lost their positions with the royal government that had employed them and had no fief to fall back on. They went into unfamiliar trade and unfamiliar farming. Governor Nabeshima pressed Tokyo hard for money to set them up in occupations; the Finance Ministry was itself in difficulty, the request was disputed and delayed, and the grants were not paid out until 1881, by which time Matsukata had become Finance Minister and Nabeshima had been dismissed.

The most exact single figure in the settlement is a date. Money stipends to the entitled shizoku of Okinawa continued to be paid until 1909. The Japanese state had abolished its own hereditary stipends in 1876. It went on paying Ryūkyūan ones for a further thirty-three years, and for six years after it had finished converting Ryūkyūan land into private property.

What was owed in return

The consideration is the diagnostic fact in any settlement, and here it is unusually clean, because there was nothing else it could have been.

A grant that buys armed service leaves the grantee with a retinue. No such grant was possible in the Ryūkyūs, for the reason that governs everything about this conquest: the weapons had been gathered to Shuri in the sixteenth century and the shizoku forbidden to carry them after 1609, so there was no armed capacity for the conqueror either to purchase or to fear. What the fiefs and stipends bought, therefore, was the only thing available — the operation of the administration.

The transaction is visible to the week. The offices had stopped working in the summer of 1879; about a hundred officials were arrested in August; on 14 September the leadership submitted a pledge of obedience; and on 22 September Urasoe Chōshō and Tomikawa Seikei — two of the three councillors who had refused Matsuda's demands in 1875 — were appointed to the eighth grade of the Japanese civil service and made advisers to the prefectural government. The prefecture then suppressed the prosecutions as an act of leniency. Men who had been in a cell in August were inside the government in September, and their fiefs were confirmed.

It did not hold cleanly, and the failure is as instructive as the arrangement. Many of the co-opted senior shizoku resigned. Tomikawa himself, who had taken office while expecting Qing intervention, left for China in 1882 and died there. The men of the upper class had their existence bound up with a Confucian and Sinitic learning that made the new government's programme not merely unwelcome but unintelligible, and a salary in a foreign ministry did not resolve that. What the settlement bought was compliance, and compliance is what it got — not agreement, and not always continuity of service.

Reform attempted, and reversed from above

The clearest evidence that the preservation was policy rather than inertia is what happened to the governor who tried to end it.

Uesugi Mochinori, the second governor, toured the prefecture himself, was appalled by the condition of the ordinary people and the conduct of the local officials, went up to Tokyo and submitted a programme of reform. He was persuasive enough that the government sent Ozaki Saburō down to inspect. Ozaki came back and reported that the governors had carelessly altered the old customs and thereby injured the feelings of the people. Iwamura Michitoshi was despatched to settle the business, and it was settled by transferring Uesugi to the Senate. The reform proposals were rejected, and the avoidance of provocation to the shizoku was preferred.

The wider context belongs here too. The political crisis of 1881 had shaken the government's own footing at home, and a state uncertain of its base does not go looking for new discontent in a periphery whose status a foreign power still disputes. The settlement in Okinawa was held in place by Tokyo, against the man on the ground who wanted to change it.

The instrument, 1899

It ended, when it ended, in a single statute, and the statute is worth reading closely because its grammar is not the grammar of the northern island.

Law No. 59, the Okinawa Prefecture Land Rearrangement Act, was sanctioned by the Emperor on 10 March 1899 and countersigned by the Prime Minister Marquis Yamagata Aritomo, the Finance Minister Count Matsukata Masayoshi, and the Home Minister Marquis Saigō Tsugumichi — the last of whom had commanded the expedition to Taiwan in 1874 that produced Japan's international claim to the Ryūkyūans in the first place. Its first two articles run:

> 第一条 沖縄県ニ於ケル土地ハ此ノ法律ノ定ムル所ニ依テ之ヲ整理ス 第二条 村ノ百姓地、地頭地、「オエカ」地、「ノロクモイ」地、上納田、「キナワ」畑ニシテ其ノ村ニ於テ地割セル土地ハ地割ニ依リ其ノ配当ヲ受ケタル者又ハ其ノ権利ヲ承継シタル者ノ所有トス。但シ其ノ配当ヲ受クヘキ者多数ノ協議ニ依リ此ノ法律施行ノ日ヨリ一箇年以内ニ地割替ヲ為スコトヲ得。

Article 1. Land in Okinawa Prefecture shall be rearranged as this Law provides. Article 2. As to village peasant land, jitō land, "oeka" land, "norokumoi" land, tribute paddy, and "kinawa" field, being land on which allotment has been performed in that village — it shall be the property of the person who received the allocation under the allotment, or of his successor in right. Provided that by agreement of a majority of those entitled to allocation, a re-allotment may be carried out within one year from the day this Law comes into force.

Read the grammar before the effect. The clause does not confiscate and it does not grant. It states that the land shall be the property of the man who happens to be holding it at the last redistribution — and then allows the village one final year to redistribute. What went in was a rotating turn; what comes out is a freehold; and the sentence performing the conversion reads like the recording of a fact. A farmer who had drawn a plot in the ordinary way now owned it, and did not think he had been given anything, because nothing visible had changed. Same man, same field, same neighbours — and a title that came thereafter from a register the government kept and a court the government ran.

Two categories vanish in the same clause, and their disappearance is not incidental. The jitō's land, which had been the material expression of an office in the kingdom's hierarchy, and the noro's and oeka's land, which had been the endowment of a priestess's office at a particular sacred grove, are listed alongside ordinary peasant plots and disposed of on the same rule: whoever last drew it, owns it. An office was converted into somebody's farm.

What became state land was defined narrowly. On the account of Uechi Ichirō's study of the drafting, the Act's state-land article

covered the sites of government offices and official residences and land directly in official use, together with the grounds of shrines of prefectural rank and above and of official temples. The kuramoto and bansho and village halls — the offices of the magiri and village administration — were made private land instead, which tells the reader plainly that the old local units were not, in the drafters' minds, organs of the state at all.

Two things were postponed. The division of forest and moor between state and private was held over, to be settled after the land tax reform had succeeded. And the taxation of urban and residential land was deferred to a second stage on the express ground that to impose it at once would, in the drafting file's phrase, startle the hearts of seventy thousand households.

The work was done by a Provisional Okinawa Prefecture Land Rearrangement Bureau reporting directly to the Finance Minister, and the Bureau's director was Narahara Shigeru, who was also the governor of the prefecture. It began on 1 April 1899 and finished in October 1903. When it was finished, the survey had fixed 112,921 chōbu as private land and 99,364 chōbu as state land — a little under half the surveyed area passing to the government. In the same year the per-capita assessment on Miyako and Yaeyama, which the preservation policy had carried unbroken from 1637, was abolished and replaced by the ordinary land tax.

Who got the forest

The one part of the settlement that was fought over openly is the forest, and it produced the only figure in this study who fought the arrangement from inside it and lost everything.

Somayama had been village common land, protected and worked under corvée by the people who used it. Narahara's position was that it was in principle state property. His administration's formula for the peasants, as the scholarship on the dispute reports it, was state ground, the people's trees — the state would take the title and the villagers might go on cutting. Against it stood Jahana Noboru,

the prefecture's agricultural engineer, who had been appointed a land survey commissioner in December 1893 and put in charge of the reclamation business, and whose counter-formula was the people's ground and the people's trees.

Jahana's own position in the order is worth stating, because it is not incidental to what happened to him. He was born in a farming household at Kochinda in 1865, entered the new prefectural normal school in 1881, and was chosen in 1882 among the first five students the prefecture sent to Tokyo at its own expense — the only one of the five who was not of shizoku birth. He read at the Gakushūin, then forestry and agriculture, and graduated at the head of his year from what became the agricultural college of the Imperial Univer - sity, encountering the people's-rights movement in Tokyo along the way. He came back as an engineer into a prefectural government in which the senior posts were held by men from Kagoshima and other prefectures.

He was removed from the reclamation post in September 1894. He resigned from the prefecture in 1898, went to Tokyo, obtained from the Home Minister Itagaki Taisuke an undertaking that Narahara would be replaced — and the Ōkuma cabinet fell that November before the undertaking could be carried out. Narahara, who had extracted from Itō and Matsukata a promise before taking the post that he would not be removed part-way, stayed sixteen years and was called the Ryūkyū king. In 1899 Jahana founded the Okinawa Club with Tōyama Kyūzō, on three planks: criticism of the prefectural administration, the land settlement, and the franchise. He was defeated in the election for the officers of the Agricultural and Industrial Bank, lost his whole property in the effort, and left for the mainland to look for work. On the way to Yamaguchi in 1901 he collapsed at Kobe station, and he never recovered. He died in 1908, four years before the parliamentary franchise reached Ok - inawa.

What happened to the forest is recorded by Ōe Shinobu in the standard reference literature, and it should be quoted in substance rather than softened. Narahara converted the peasants' common

somayama into state land and forced through a policy of selling off its cultivable portions — to stipended nobles and shizoku, to large merchants from outside the prefecture and foreign merchants, and to senior officials. In 1906, at his instance, special regulations for the disposal of Okinawa somayama were promulgated, completing its conversion into state forest. The corvée by which villagers had maintained it was abolished and replaced by a tax, which removed them from it, after which much of it ceased to be managed at all and degraded.

That is who got what. The instrument that made a farmer the owner of the plot he already worked, and disturbed nobody, is the same instrument under which the common woodland of the vil - lages passed to the government and its best ground was sold to the class that had been confirmed in 1879 and to merchants from the metropole.

And who got the trade

The kingdom's revenue had never been principally in its soil. It was in the passage between two empires and the licence that made the passage lawful, and that had been abolished in 1875 when tribute to the Qing was forbidden, with the kingdom's trading house at Fuzhou ordered closed the same year.

What replaced it did not go to Ryūkyūans. From about 1882 merchants from other prefectures — chiefly from Osaka and from Kagoshima — established themselves in Okinawa, and by the standard account they came close to monopolising the trade in rice and in sugar, the two commodities the islands moved. They are called kiryū shōnin, sojourning merchants, and they became in time a political force as well as an economic one, some of them sitting in the prefectural assembly; certain governors protected them, and the protection was resented. The shipping between the islands and the mainland was built on the same traffic.

So the commercial half of the settlement can be stated in one line. The old monopoly, which had belonged to a king and had been

operated for two and a half centuries for the benefit of a Japanese domain, was abolished; and the trade that replaced it was taken by men from the two mainland cities with the deepest existing con - nection to the islands, one of which was the former overlord's cap - ital.

Where the drafting came from

Which raises the question the last case put and this one answers differently. Is this an American law, a European law, or a Japanese one?

The honest answer is that this study has found no foreign hand in it at all, and that the absence is the finding.

The fiction is Japanese and it is domestic. The Act of 1899 does what the Land Tax Reform of 1873 had done to the rest of Japan — convert a customary, collective, in-kind obligation into an indi - vidual, registered, money-assessed title — twenty-six years later, under a bureau of the same Finance Ministry, with the ordinary machinery of survey, valuation, land ledger and land tax. The ref - erence literature makes the parallel explicitly: the mainland's ca - dastral work ran from 1874 to 1880; Okinawa's ran from 1899 to 1903. It is the metropolitan reform arriving late.

The fiction is also not the same fiction. On the northern island the same government in the same years had declared the ground undeveloped, disposed of a million hectares without competition under a homestead entry brought from the United States, and passed an allotment act that the Japanese reference literature itself describes as modelled on the Dawes Act — the machinery of a set - tler republic, imported by advisers hired for the purpose, because what was wanted there was ground to seat settlers on. Nothing of the kind appears here. There was no vacancy claim, because the islands were visibly full of people visibly farming; there was no homestead entry, because there were no settlers to entice; there was no allotment act aimed at a distinct indigenous category, be - cause no such category existed in law. What was wanted in Ok -

inawa was a taxable revenue from a population that was not going anywhere, and for that the state reached into its own drawer.

The two settlements are therefore not two doctrines but one doctrine meeting two objects, and the divergence is exactly what a reader should expect once the object is named. A conqueror who wants the ground reaches for whatever instrument makes people leave it. A conqueror who wants a flow reaches for whatever instrument makes the flow legible. The same men, in the same decade, under the same emperor's seal, did both, and the record contains no evidence that either choice was made by consulting a foreigner about the other.

Reading the settlement against the framework

The fiction here is neither vacancy nor a straightforward recognition; it is divisibility executed in the voice of recognition, and that combination is worth naming. A collective holding was declared partible, and the resulting share was then declared already to belong to the man who happened to hold the turn. Nobody was told the land was empty, because it plainly was not. Nobody was told he was being given anything, because grammatically he was not. And the operation leaves almost no trace an investigator would recognise as dispossession, because in the arable land it dispossessed nobody at all — the loss falls entirely on what the jiwari had not covered, which is the forest, and on the offices the same clause quietly liquidated.

The refinement this case offers is about what preservation actually is. The framework treats the settlement as the moment the conquered wealth is divided, and looks for the instrument that divides it. Here the instrument arrived twenty years late, and the interval was not a delay before the settlement — it was the settlement. Preserving the old order meant that the kingdom's own tax machinery went on collecting for a new master; that the old aristocracy went on drawing tribute from fiefs and drawing money sti-

pends until 1909; and that the per-capita assessment on the southern islands went on falling, unaltered, on the same households for twenty-four more years. **Where a conqueror wants a flow rather than the ground, preserving the conquered order's property and tax law is not restraint and not a transitional expedient; it is the cheapest available form of extraction, because the machine he inherited was already collecting and its operators already knew how.** The corpus should stop reading a preserved old order as evidence of a light hand and start pricing it.

And preservation is never neutral among the preserved. The same policy that guaranteed a fief to a senior shizoku left the minor officialdom with nothing and no compensation for two years; and it carried a levy assessed per head on the people of Miyako and Yaeyama from 1637 through to 1903, twenty-four years after the state that abolished per-head assessment for its own subjects took possession of them. When the framework asks who is inside a settlement and who is outside, the answer in a preserved order is the answer the previous conqueror gave, unamended — which is why the question of what the preserved order had itself been built to do belongs in this module and not in a footnote.

One thing the settlement does not settle. It made owners of farmers, marquises of kings, and state forest of the common woods; it left the trade to men from Osaka and Kagoshima; and it did all of this without once addressing the conquered population in its own right or explaining to them why any of it was lawful. What the order said about itself, and to whom, is the next thing to establish.

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A note on sources. Quoted exactly, in the original with translation: Articles 1 and 2 of the Okinawa Prefecture Land Rearrangement Act, Law No. 59 of 10 March 1899, from the signed original held in the National Archives of Japan digital archive, together with the names of the sanctioning and countersigning ministers. The bracketed transliterations oeka and norokumoi are as they appear in the statute, which sets those two terms in katakana. One character in the digitised text of Article 2 appears as 他

where the sense and the parallel drafting texts require 地, and it is given here as 地.

Paraphrased from modern scholarship, briefly and with credit: Gotō Arata's 2016 article in Musashino Hōgaku on the first years of the prefecture and the first governor's policy toward the shizoku, for Matsuda's March 1879 outline and its reasoning, for the stipend and fief rule, for the difficulty of registering entitlement, for the plight of the unstipended shizoku and the delayed establishment grants, and for the reversal of Uesugi's reform proposals; Uechi Ichirō's 2013 study in Takaoka Hōgaku of the 1899 land settlement, for the definition of state land, the treatment of magiri and village offices, the postponement of the forest division and of urban land taxation, and the phrase about startling seventy thousand households; and Ōe Shinobu, in the standard Japanese encyclopedic literature, for the conversion of somayama into state land and the classes to whom its arable portions were sold. The characterisation of the somayama dispute as state ground, the people's trees against the people's ground and the people's trees follows the published scholarship on Jahana's campaign and is reported here as that scholarship reports it, not as a verified primary slogan.

From the reference literature, checked where possible against more than one entry: the nature and disputed origin of the jiwari system; the figures of 112,921 chōbu private and 99,364 chōbu state land at the completion of the settlement; the dates of the mainland cadastral work and of the Okinawa bureau; the account of the kiryū shōnin and their command of the rice and sugar trades from about 1882; Shō Tai's elevation to marquis on 2 May 1885, his seat in the House of Peers from 1890, and his death in 1901; the continuation of money stipends to entitled shizoku until 1909; and Jahana Noboru's career, his removal in September 1894, his resignation in 1898, the failure of the approach to Itagaki, the Okinawa Club of 1899, his collapse at Kobe in 1901 and his death in 1908. One source gives his death as 1912; the weight of the reference literature gives 1908 and that is followed here.

Not verified and flagged: the precise terms of Shō Tai's own financial settlement, which this study has not been able to establish from the record and which should be found before any later module reasons from it; and the full text of the Act beyond its opening articles, which has been read here only through the National Archives image of the signed original and through the drafting materials quoted in Uechi's study. The claim that no foreign adviser participated in the Okinawa land settlement is a negative finding based on the absence of any such figure from the Japanese scholarship consulted, and should be treated as provisional.

MODULE 3

NO DOUBT THEY CAME FROM JAPAN

Module 3 — the robe, 1650–1926: the legitimating story, who wrote it, whom it was addressed to, what the order paid for when it did not have to, and what happened when the conquered took it up and pressed it

A case study in the Patterns of Power series · Thomas J. Bryan with Claude (Anthropic) · held as tested, not revealed

The story was already written, and the conquered had written it

The account by which Japan explained its possession of the Ryūkyūs is not a Japanese invention of the 1870s. It is a Ryūkyūan court document of the 1650s and 1670s, composed by a regent of the kingdom, forty years after Satsuma's conquest, and it says what the Meiji decree of 1872 would say.

In 1650 Haneji Chōshū — known by his Chinese-style name Shō Shōken, and later the sessei who rationalised the kingdom's ritual expenditure — compiled at the king's command the Chūzan seikan, the first official history the Ryūkyūs ever had. It was written under Satsuma's supervision, in Japanese script rather than classical Chinese for its main volumes, and it recorded that Shunten, the first king of Ryūkyū, was the son of Minamoto no Tametomo, the Japanese warrior of the Hōgen war, so that the royal line descended from the Seiwa Genji.

Twenty-three years later, in the third month of 1673, Haneji set down in a memorandum of instructions the general form of the claim:

> 窃かに惟ふは此国人生初は、日本より渡りたる儀疑い無く御座候。然れば末世の今に、天地・山川・五形・五倫・鳥獣・草木の名に至る迄皆通達せり。然雖も言葉の余り相違は遠国の上久しく通融絶えたる故也。

Privately I consider that the people of this country, at their first beginning, without doubt came over from Japan. Therefore even now, in this latter age, the names of heaven and earth, mountain and river, the five elements and the five relations, birds and beasts, grasses and trees, all pass across between us. Yet that the spoken language should differ so greatly is because, this being a distant country, communication was long cut off.

Two hundred and six years before the annexation, the chief minister of the kingdom asserted common Japanese descent for the whole population, offered the shared vocabulary as proof, and dis - posed in advance of the one obvious objection — that the two peoples could not understand each other when they spoke.

The story did not begin with him either. The claim that Tamet - omo fled to Ryūkyū appears in Japanese writing in the first half of the sixteenth century, in the Rinzai monastic literature of the Kyoto Gozan, its earliest known appearance being in a piece by Gesshū Jukei, who died in 1533. So the sequence runs: a Japanese monastic legend, carried south, entered into the conquered kingdom's own official history by a regent working under the conquerors who had taken his king to Kagoshima, and elaborated by his successors. In the kingdom's last decades one of those successors was Giwan Chōhō, a sanshikan, who compiled a comparison of Ryūkyūan vocabulary with the ancient Japanese of the Kojiki, the Nihon shoki and the Man'yōshū, and argued that the two shared common ground.

Giwan Ueekata Chōhō was one of the two envoys sent to Tokyo in the summer of 1872 to congratulate the emperor. He was in the room on 14 September when the decree was read that made his king a domain king.

There is a scholarly caution to enter here and it should not be smoothed away. Takara Kurayoshi has argued that Haneji produced

the common-descent argument in 1673 not as a programme but as an illustrative precedent, in the course of pressing the view that the king's annual pilgrimage to Kudaka Island was burdensome and should be simplified. On that reading the founding text of Japanese-Ryūkyūan common ancestry was written while its author was trying to cut a ritual budget. Both things can be true, and the fact that a doctrine was produced for a small purpose has never prevented it from being available for a large one.

What the decree did with it

The imperial decree of 14 September 1872, raising Shō Tai to King of the Domain of Ryūkyū, contains the whole argument in eleven characters:

> 今琉球近ク南服ニ在リ、氣類相同ク、言文殊ナル無ク、世々薩摩ノ附庸タリ。

Now Ryūkyū lies near, within the southern zone of service; its kind and nature are the same, its speech and writing are not different, and for generations it has been a dependency of Satsuma.

Notice what the sentence does not do. It does not argue, it does not persuade, and it offers no evidence. It recites — in the indicative, as a report of facts already established — three propositions, of which the first two are the Haneji claim in compressed form and the third is the sentence extracted from Shō Nei at Kagoshima in 1611.

The claim that speech and writing were not different was, on its face, untrue, and demonstrably so to anyone in the room. Ryūkyūan and Japanese are separate branches of one family and were not then mutually intelligible; the men who received the decree could not have conversed with the officials who handed it to them in their own home speech. That is precisely the objection Haneji had answered in 1673, and the Meiji drafters simply skipped the answer and asserted the conclusion. What allowed them to do so without embarrassment is that the proposition was not novel

and had not been minted by them. It had been on the record, in the conquered kingdom's own official history, for two centuries.

The audience abroad, and what it had to be paid in

Ask, of any robe, whose recognition it needs, and the answer here is not in the islands.

Two governments had to be answered. The Qing court had protested formally through its minister in Tokyo in September 1878 and again in May 1879, and did not accept the annexation. The Western legations in Tokyo had been petitioned by the Ryūkyūan envoys, who had presented the kingdom's treaties with the United States of 1854, France of 1855 and the Netherlands of 1859 as evidence that they were a state in their own right. Japan's answer to both was that Ryūkyū had been from time immemorial a constituent part of Japan, and that its disposal was accordingly a domestic matter in which nobody else had standing.

The choice of word carried the argument. Shobun, disposition, is a term from administrative law: the settling of a matter within a jurisdiction. It is not a word one state uses of another. Everything the operation was called, from the disposition officer whose post did not exist in the establishment to the fourteen-word proclamation abolishing the domain, was chosen so that the record would read as internal housekeeping.

And the same argument had been rehearsed five years earlier in a different register. When Japan landed three and a half thousand men in southern Taiwan in 1874, it justified the expedition, as Robert Eskildsen has shown, on the proposition that a state must extend civilisation and political authority into territory over which sovereignty is claimed — a formula assembled out of contemporary Western imperial doctrine and the Restoration's own vocabulary. The settlement that followed produced the sentence about subjects belonging to Japan that Tokyo afterwards treated as Chinese recognition. Edwin Pak-Wah Leung's reappraisal of that episode holds

that no such recognition was in fact obtained and that the treaty never mentions Ryūkyū at all; but what matters here is not whether the claim was good, only that it was made to foreigners, in their vocabulary, for their benefit.

An audience of foreign observers cannot be paid in a story, because it does not attend the sermon. It has to be paid in visible institutions, and it was. On 4 April 1879 the Ryūkyūs became a prefecture — the same word, in the same official gazette, as Kanagawa or Aichi — and for the following twenty years that prefecture ran the deposed kingdom's land system, the deposed kingdom's taxation, the deposed kingdom's local administration and the deposed kingdom's ranking of persons. The name was for the map. The substance stayed where it had been.

Toward Japan's own public this study has found remarkably little. The abolition of a four-hundred-and-fifty-year-old kingdom was announced in fourteen words and a proviso. There was no campaign, no pamphlet literature this study could find, and no attempt to persuade Japanese taxpayers of anything, and the absence is consistent with the rest: a domestic administrative matter does not require the public to be convinced, because a public that has been told it is domestic will not ask.

What the order paid for when it did not have to

The sharpest evidence in this module is a shrine, and it is sharp because the government spent on it more than it was asked for.

The kingdom had kept eight official shrines, the Ryūkyū hassha, headed by Naminoue-gū on the cliff above Naha harbour. They were part of the royal establishment: the king went in procession every new year to pray for the peace and prosperity of the country, and the court's officials attended as public business. Their deities were not indigenous. Naminoue enshrines Izanami, Hayatama-no-o and Kotosaka-no-o — the Kumano triad — and the eight are Kumano and Hachiman shrines, the Japanese-derived layer of

Ryūkyūan religion, patronised by kings and aristocrats. The ordinary people's religion was elsewhere, in the utaki and the way-side places of prayer, and in the hands of the noro.

In 1889 the governor of Okinawa petitioned the government to rank Naminoue-gū as a national shrine of the middle grade. The government did not grant the petition; it exceeded it, raising the shrine instead to imperial shrine of the minor grade on the ground that it enshrined Izanami, an ancestral deity of the imperial house, and sanctioning the ranking on 27 January 1890. Naminoue was the only shrine in the prefecture to receive that rank.

The reasoning is on the record, and Torigoe Kenzaburō's study of Ryūkyūan religious history reports it plainly. In the early years of the prefecture the national allegiance of the inhabitants was not settled; they still relied in their hearts on rescue from the Qing, and that tendency remained conspicuous into the following decade. In view of the obstacles this presented to the conduct of prefectural administration, one of the eight shrines was to be brought into the national ranking system, so that the work of the administration might be carried through by means of religious faith, and the hearts of the people drawn into unity with the state and the imperial house.

Force never pays for what it does not need. An order that already held every instrument of coercion in the islands, that had beaten a hundred officials into compliance in a single month ten years earlier, and that was under no compulsion whatever to promote a provincial shrine, went out of its way to do so, upgraded it beyond the request, and wrote down that the reason was that the population's loyalty was in doubt. That expenditure is the evidence. Whatever the men who made it privately believed, they had established by the act itself that a currency of legitimacy was needed and that this was the coin they could pay in.

And the choice of coin tells the second half of the story. The state ranked the layer of Ryūkyūan religion that was already Japanese in shape, and did nothing whatever with the layer that was not. The utaki were not incorporated into the shrine hierarchy, not en-

dowed, not ranked, and not prohibited. When the Land Re-arrangement Act of 1899 defined what should become state land, it named the grounds of shrines of prefectural rank and above and of official temples, and the sacred groves of the villages appear in it nowhere at all. The noro were not prosecuted; their service lands were converted into somebody's private farm by the same clause that converted everybody else's. Nothing was forged, and nothing was destroyed. An existing channel of trusted authority was picked up and pointed at Tokyo, and the rest was left to become quaint.

The shrine in the castle

The completion of the operation took another generation and produced an object that says more than any despatch.

A proposal for a prefectural shrine was raised in October 1909. A statement of reasons drawn up in April 1910 named the deities as Shunten in the principal seat, with Minamoto no Tametomo and Shō Tai at the sides, and went to the Home Ministry's Shrine Bureau that September; the answer is not known. The plan was revived in February 1912 as a commemoration of the fiftieth year of the emperor's reign and abandoned when he died. It was raised again in December 1922.

The shrine that was finally authorised on 31 March 1923, built between that September and January 1925, and raised to the rank of prefectural shrine on 20 October 1926, was called the Okinawa Shrine. Its principal deities were Shunten, described as the national ancestor; Shō En, the restorer; Shō Kei, credited with the culture of the country; and Shō Tai — described in the shrine's own statement of origins as the last lord of the country, who by the grand design of the Meiji Restoration determined the direction in which the people of the prefecture should face. Beside them, as a subsidiary enshrined deity, in the sense of returning to the origin, was placed Shunten's father, Minamoto no Tametomo.

The site chosen was Shuri Castle.

Read the object rather than the doctrine. The dynasty Japan deposed in 1879 was, within two generations, enshrined as gods in the palace it had been evicted from, with the twelfth-century Japanese warrior who was supposed to be its ancestor standing beside it, and the last king — who had refused every demand for four years and had to be removed by four hundred soldiers — recorded on the founding document as the man who had pointed his people the right way. In the previous year, 1922, a monument had been raised at the supposed landing place of Tametomo, and the name inscribed on it, of the man whose efforts had secured its erection, was that of Admiral Tōgō Heihachirō.

This is not what a settler order does with a defeated royal house, because a settler order has no use for one. It is what an order does when it wants the population and the ground together, and has found a story on the premises that lets it take both without saying that anything was taken.

What the conquered did with it

The hardest part of this module is that the robe took, and that the men in whom it took were the ablest people the islands produced.

Iha Fuyū, who founded the study of Okinawa as a field and gave the old kingdom the name by which it is still periodised, developed the common-descent argument in detail and made it the frame of his life's work. He was looking for something specific: a ground on which Okinawans could stand as the equals of the people who were then discriminating against them, and the ground he found was that they had always been the same people. The standard criticism of him, which the Japanese reference literature makes without malice, is that his critique of the discrimination modern Japan produced was weak, that he succeeded in giving Okinawans a way of taking pride in themselves, and that the argument he built was in the event available to the policies that incorporated Okinawa into the emperor-system state. His own treatment of the indigenous religious layer runs the same way. Lecturing on the yuta, the female

mediums, he said that the old women of Okinawa who moved in that world were two thousand years behind the new women of the metropolitan women's movement.

Ōta Chōfu, who founded the Ryūkyū Shimpō, put the programme at its plainest in a lecture in 1900:

> 沖縄今日の急務は何であるかと云へば、一から十まで他府県に似せることであります。極端にいへば、クシャミすることまで他府県の通りにすると云う事であります。

If you ask what Okinawa's urgent business is today, it is to resemble the other prefectures from one through ten. Put to the extreme, it is to do even our sneezing in the manner of the other prefectures.

And in 1903 the thing that programme was really about became visible. At the Fifth Domestic Industrial Exposition in Osaka, a sideshow calling itself the Academic Anthropology Pavilion put human beings on display: Ryūkyūan women, alongside Ainu, Taiwanese, Koreans, Chinese, Indians and Hawaiians. Korean and Chinese students in Japan protested. Ōta protested too, in his own paper, on two grounds — that the exhibition shamed the face of a neighbouring country, and that for the Ryūkyūan people to be placed on a level with the Taiwanese highlanders and the Ainu was an insult beyond which there was none.

Hold both halves of that sentence, because they are one sentence. The man is objecting to a real humiliation and objecting to it on the ground that he belongs above the people beside him. That is what a robe of common ancestry does when it is offered to a population the same state is simultaneously ranking. It gives the conquered an argument they can actually use — the only kind of argument that lets them press a claim rather than merely refuse one — and the argument's operative content is that somebody else is lower.

He was not a dupe and neither was Iha. Both were reasoning correctly from where they stood, with the materials that had been placed in their field, toward the only door they could see. What the module records is that the door had been built two hundred and thirty years earlier by a regent of their own kingdom working for a

previous conqueror, and that walking through it required them to say, in public, what Ōta said in 1903.

Reading the robe against the framework

The prediction half-holds, and the half that fails is the useful one. The framework expects a colonial robe to be cut for the metropole whose belief funds the conquest, and to have almost nothing addressed to the conquered. Here the story was indeed cut for outsiders — but the outsiders were foreign governments rather than a domestic public, because a state under extraterritorial jurisdiction on its own soil, whose whole programme was a demonstration staged for the powers that had told it a demonstration was the price of revision, has an audience abroad before it has one at home. And that audience, as the framework predicts for any order seeking admission to a club of powers, could not be paid in a narrative. It had to be paid in an institution that would show on a map, which is why a prefecture existed on paper for twenty years before it existed in anything else.

The refinement this case offers concerns provenance. The framework holds that the trusted-information leg can be forged, redirected, or inherited, and that redirection is cheap because somebody else has already done the work of earning the trust. Okinawa shows a form of redirection cheaper still, and it deserves its own name: **where an earlier conquest has left the conquered order arguing its own kinship with the conqueror's people, the next conqueror does not need to redirect a channel — he need only cite one.** He pays nothing, he invents nothing, and the claim arrives pre-defended, because to attack it is to attack the conquered kingdom's own official history, written by its own regent, at its own king's command. The 1872 decree does not persuade anybody that Ryūkyūans are Japanese. It reports it, in the same grammar in which it reports the dependency of 1611, and both reports were manufactured by the conquered under an earlier conqueror's supervision.

And the corollary is the module's hardest finding. A robe that says the conquered are a different kind of being can only be resisted by asserting the difference, which is why settler orders produce nativism. A robe that says the conquered are the same kind of being can be used — and the only way to use it is to demand promotion. The most capable men of the conquered population will take it up, press it hard, and find that the currency in which the claim must be paid is the inferiority of somebody else. **Where a conquering order offers common ancestry rather than permanent difference, expect the conquered elite to adopt the robe and expect its adoption to take the form of a demand to be re-ranked upward, at the expense of populations ranked lower.** That is not a failure of character in the men who did it. It is what the position offers.

One thing this module cannot settle. The robe was addressed to foreigners, taken up by the conquered elite, and made into architecture at Shuri in 1925. What was done to the children who would have to hold it — what was taught, in what language, from what age, and what was withheld — is a separate operation with its own instruments, and it is what comes next.

❧

A note on sources. Quoted exactly, in the original with translation: Haneji Chōshū's memorandum of the third month of 1673, as transmitted in Majikina Ankō's collected works and reproduced in the Japanese reference literature — this study has not seen the manuscript and gives the passage at one remove; the operative clause of the imperial decree of 14 September 1872, from the text on Japanese Wikisource; and Ōta Chōfu's lecture of 1900, which is widely reproduced in the Japanese reference literature in the form given here and which this study has likewise not traced to its original publication. All three should be collated against better texts before a later module rests on their exact wording.

From the reference literature and the scholarship, paraphrased and credited: the compilation of the Chūzan seikan by Haneji Chōshū in 1650, its use of Japanese script and Japanese reign dating, and its identification of Shunten as the son of Minamoto no Tametomo; the appearance of the

Tametomo legend in the Kyoto Gozan Rinzai literature of the first half of the sixteenth century, its earliest known attestation being in Gesshū Jukei; Giwan Chōhō's comparison of Ryūkyūan vocabulary with ancient Japanese, and his presence in Tokyo as one of the congratulatory envoys of 1872; Takara Kurayoshi's argument that Haneji advanced the common-descent claim as an illustrative precedent while pressing for the simplification of the royal pilgrimage to Kudaka, which is followed here as a caution rather than resolved; Robert Eskildsen on the civilising justification advanced for the Taiwan expedition of 1874; and Edwin Pak-Wah Leung's reappraisal in Modern Asian Studies holding that no Chinese recognition of Japanese sovereignty over Ryūkyū was in fact obtained in 1874 and that the treaty does not mention Ryūkyū.

On the shrines: the composition and standing of the eight official shrines and the primacy of Naminoue-gū, and the account of the government's reasoning in ranking it — that the inhabitants' national allegiance remained unsettled and that faith was to be used to carry the administration through — follow Torigoe Kenzaburō's Ryūkyū shūkyōshi no kenkyū as summarised in the Japanese reference literature; the governor's petition of 1889 for the middle national grade, the government's substitution of the minor imperial grade on the ground that the shrine enshrined Izanami, and the sanction of 27 January 1890 are given as that literature reports them and have not been checked against the Home Ministry file. The founding history of the Okinawa Shrine — the proposals of 1909, 1910 and 1912, the renewal of December 1922, the list of enshrined deities with Tametomo as a subsidiary deity, the choice of Shuri Castle as the site, the authorisation of 31 March 1923, the construction of 1923–25 and the elevation of 20 October 1926, together with the characterisation of Shō Tai — is taken from the statement of origins published by the Okinawa Prefecture Shrine Agency, which is an interested party in the ordinary sense and is used here for the sequence and the wording of its own document rather than for interpretation. The Tametomo landing monument of 1922 and Tōgō Heihachirō's inscription on it are as reported in the Japanese reference literature.

On Iha Fuyū: the assessment that his critique of Japanese discrimination against Okinawa was weak and that his common-descent argument proved usable by the policies incorporating Okinawa into the emperor-system state is the standard criticism as recorded in the Japanese reference literature, alongside Torigoe's judgement that his work was a great achievement marred by an over-reliance on documents and a haste to conclusions; his remark about the women around the yuta is from his lecture on the historical study of the yuta, which is in the public domain. Ōta Chōfu's

comments on the Osaka exhibition of 1903 are as reported in the reference literature from the Ryūkyū Shimpō of that year and have not been read in the original paper.

A negative finding, offered provisionally: this study looked for, and did not find, a campaign of public justification addressed to the Japanese population, or any missionary or conversion effort aimed at Ryūkyūans, or any prohibition of the utaki or prosecution of the noro. Each of those absences bears weight in the argument above, and any of them could be overturned by a source this study has not reached.

MODULE 4

YOU CANNOT EVEN USE THE ORDINARY LANGUAGE

Module 4 — formation, 1880–1945: what was built first and for whom, which half of the apparatus was pressed on the population and which half was rationed to it, what the state left entirely alone, and the six months in which the pupils struck for more of it

A case study in the Patterns of Power series · Thomas J. Bryan with Claude (Anthropic) · held as tested, not revealed

The first thing the prefecture built was a language school in its own building

In February 1880, ten months after the castle was surrendered and five months after the last of the arrested officials had been released, the Okinawa prefectural government opened a Conversation Training Institute.

It was not a school in any ordinary sense. It occupied a room in the official quarters. Its pupils were selected from among the best of the existing students of Shuri and Naha — which is to say, the sons of the class whose refusal to open the district offices had had to be broken by force the previous August. Its teachers were the clerks of the prefecture's own education section, teaching in the hours they could spare from their desks. Its materials were the ordinary language of the country and elementary school textbooks.

It ran for four months and then became the normal school, which trained the prefecture's teachers. In December 1880 the education section published Okinawa taiwa — Okinawa

Conversation — in two volumes: everyday words and everyday ex - changes, set out in parallel columns, standard Japanese on one side and the Shuri tongue on the other. It was the first textbook of standard Japanese ever made for Okinawa, it was used in the nor - mal school and then in the primary schools, and it was reissued in 1882.

Look at what that sequence is and is not. Before there was a school system, before there were teachers, before there was a cur - riculum, and eighteen years before there was conscription, there was a room in the government building where clerks taught the sons of the old officialdom to speak Japanese. The first instrument of formation in this case was not aimed at children at all. It was aimed at the men who would have to run the registry, and it was built because a government that cannot be understood by its own staff cannot collect a tax.

What the metropole was doing to itself in the same years

It matters that the state pointing this at Okinawa had not finished pointing it at itself.

The school system promulgated in 1872 had undertaken, in its preamble, that there should be no village with an unlearned household and no household with an unlearned person, among nobility, samurai, foot soldiers, farmers, artisans, merchants and women and children alike. What followed was not a smooth ascent. Enrolment nationally stood at just under forty per cent in 1877 and had fallen to about forty-five per cent in 1887 — sixty for boys, twenty-eight for girls — a low reached partly because the school ordinance of 1886 had made fees the basic source of school finance, and partly because ordinary people did not want it. Peasants in western Japan burned schools in the same years they rioted against the conscription proclamation. Enrolment did not pass ninety per cent until 1902, and the thing that moved it was the abolition of fees

in 1900 and the compulsory-attendance provisions that came with it.

So the formation being exported was a machine still under con - struction, whose designers had just spent thirty years discovering that a population will not attend a school it is charged for. That fact will explain a good deal of the Okinawan arithmetic.

The arithmetic of the school

The figures for Okinawa are the lowest in the country, for twenty years, by a wide margin, and they move at a very particular mo - ment.

In 1883 the school-attendance rate in Okinawa Prefecture was 2.85 per cent — the lowest of any prefecture in Japan in a year when the highest, Nagano, stood at 71.51 per cent. Ten years later, in 1893, the prefecture counted 16,192 children of school age and an enrolment ratio of 9.90 per cent. After the war with China the same count gave 22,150 children and 31.5 per cent. By 1899 the rate had reached 44.05 per cent — still the lowest in Japan, in a year when the highest, Nara, stood at 89.44 per cent.

Two things follow. The first is that for the first sixteen years of the prefecture there was, in any serious sense, no formation of the Ok - inawan population at all. Compulsory schooling was proclaimed for the prefecture in 1886; ninety children in a hundred did not attend. What existed was a small apparatus manufacturing interpreters, clerks and teachers out of the old official class, which is exactly what the Conversation Training Institute had been built to do.

The second is where the curve bends. It bends at 1895. The war with China settled the question that had kept the prefecture's whole policy frozen — whether these islands would remain Japanese at all — and within a few years the enrolment ratio had tripled. The state began seriously forming the population at the precise moment it stopped fearing it would have to give the population back.

The capacity half: rationed, and announced as compassion

The sharpest document in this module is an address delivered to an assembled school by its principal, and the students who heard it went on strike for six months.

In 1894 Kodama Kihachi arrived from the mainland to take over the Okinawa Prefectural Middle School. Addressing the whole student body, he said:

> 皆さんは普通語さえ完全に使えないくせに、英語まで学ばなければならないという気の毒な境遇にいる

You are in the pitiable position of having to learn even English, when you cannot properly use so much as the ordinary language.

He then moved to abolish the English classes. The students were enraged — not by the removal of a subject but by the pity, in which they heard exactly what was in it. On that occasion the affair was settled by the vice-principal Shimokuni, whom they trusted, who arranged for English to be retained as an elective.

In October 1895 Kodama suspended Shimokuni from his post and dismissed Tajima Risaburō, a teacher known for his sympathy with Ryūkyūan culture. The school went up.

The tactic the students used was precise. A group of them, Iha Fuyū among them, began submitting notices of withdrawal in a rolling sequence, to keep pressure on both the school and the prefectural office, while simultaneously working to bring the whole student body including the junior years into the movement. Most of the school submitted withdrawal notices, and from 12 November the middle school was effectively on strike. The pupils' representatives then formally served their principal with a recommendation that he resign.

Kodama expelled five of them under a Ministry of Education ordinance as the ringleaders of a disturbance: Kanna Kenwa, Teruya Hiroshi, Majikina Ankō, Yabiku Mōshō and Iha Fuyū. It made things worse. The students put their case in the newspapers, sub-

mitted a memorial to the Minister of Education in Tokyo, and trav - elled round the schools of Okinawa Island urging people not to en - rol at the middle school at all. Public opinion in the prefecture was with them throughout. In 1896 Kodama was held responsible for the dispute and dismissed.

The strike succeeded. The leaders were not readmitted.

What they did afterwards is the module's other half. Iha Fuyū spent three years failing entrance examinations, got into the Third Higher School at Kyoto and then into Tokyo Imperial University, met his dismissed teacher Tajima again in Tokyo, shared lodgings with him, and out of that reunion built the discipline of Okinawan studies. Teruya Hiroshi passed into the First Higher School at his first attempt, read engineering at Kyoto Imperial University, worked as a railway engineer in Taiwan, and became mayor of Naha. Kinjō Kikō was allowed back, graduated, went through the Fifth Higher School to the medical faculty at Tokyo Imperial University, prac - tised as a doctor, and was also mayor of Naha. Majikina Ankō was allowed back, became a journalist, and succeeded Iha as director of the prefectural library. Yabiku Mōshō killed himself.

And Kanna Kenwa, who had wanted to be a naval officer since childhood, was helped into the Naval Academy — by Narahara Shi - geru, the governor of the prefecture. He reached rear-admiral and afterwards sat in the House of Representatives.

That is the same governor who in those same years was convert - ing the villages' common forest into state land and selling its arable portions to stipended nobles, outside merchants and senior offi - cials, and who would shortly break the one man of common birth among the prefecture's first five state scholars. He put an expelled sixteen-year-old through the Naval Academy. Both acts belong to the same policy, and neither is an aberration in it.

The identity half: pressed, and largely not by the state

Against the ration on the capacity side stands the campaign on the language side, and its most notorious instrument turns out to be something nobody ever ordered.

The dialect placard — a strip of wood the size of a fish-cake board, on a cord — was hung round the neck of a pupil who was heard speaking his own language at school. He wore it until he caught another pupil doing the same, and could pass it on. The enforcement therefore ran between children, and required no adult attention at all once it was started.

Three things about it need to be said carefully, because the received picture is wrong in each.

Its date is earlier than the standard account. The Okinawa encyclopaedia gives its beginning as around 1907. Kondō Ken'ichirō's research on school commemorative volumes has revised that, establishing cases by 1903 at the latest, and Itani Yasuhiko's monograph collects instances from before 1911. It ran, in some places, into the years after the Pacific war.

It was never commanded. This is Itani's central finding and it should be quoted in substance. Okinawa saw repeated and severe campaigns for the use of the ordinary and then the standard language — but through the whole of them, in no period whatever, was any ordinance or directive ever issued instructing schools to use a dialect placard. It scarcely appears in official documents at all, and was throughout treated as a means of instruction not to be spoken of too openly. Its two defining characteristics, on his account, are that it was customary and unofficial, and that it was semi-spontaneous and grassroots.

And its meaning was fixed by outsiders, late. In 1940, with the language campaign running as part of the national spiritual mobilisation — school principals reporting to the prefecture's education section, on a set form, each year, the number of pupils caught using the dialect and the best-performing classes — Yanagi Sōetsu

and the people of the Japan Folk Crafts Association visited Okinawa and objected that the prefecture's promotion of standard Japanese had gone too far. The dispute that followed is remembered as the Okinawa dialect controversy, and it is in the course of it that the placard was discovered by mainland intellectuals and acquired the symbolic weight it has carried ever since.

The hardest fact in this module belongs to that controversy. The mainland visitors were arguing for the preservation of the Okinawan language. The people of Okinawa, on Itani's account, in the main supported the prefecture — because what they were afraid of was discrimination, and the prefecture was offering them the instrument for escaping it.

One comparative caution belongs here, because the practice is not peculiar to these islands. Placards of the same kind were used in France against Occitan, Provençal and Breton speakers, and in Wales, where the object is remembered as the Welsh Not. The Japanese reference literature asserts that the French practice was taken into Japan and applied with particular energy in Okinawa because the linguistic distance was greatest there; this study has not been able to verify a route of transmission, and simple convergence would explain the resemblance as well. What is certain is that the device was not reserved for Ryūkyūans: it was used elsewhere in Japan on speakers of Japanese dialects, which means that what an Okinawan child was punished for was not being foreign but being provincial.

What the state left entirely alone

The instruments of formation are conventionally four — school, language, religion, calendar — and the striking thing about this case is that only the first two were used.

Japan changed its calendar to the solar reckoning on 1 January 1873, six years before the annexation. The Okinawan ritual year did not change. The observances went on being kept by the lunar calendar, in the villages and in the households, through the whole of

the prefectural period; the thing that eventually disrupted them was not the reform but the war of 1945 and the economic trans - formation that followed it. Okinawa keeps a double calendar to this day, and its ordinary domestic rites — the hearth god, the ancestral offerings on the first and fifteenth of each month — were never touched.

Nor was the religion. The sacred groves were not prohibited, the priestesses were not prosecuted, and no conversion effort of any kind was directed at Ryūkyūans. What the state did with religion, it did in 1890, by taking the layer of Ryūkyūan practice that was already Japanese in shape — the eight Kumano and Hachiman shrines of the old royal establishment — and ranking the chief of them into the national hierarchy. The village groves were left where they were and allowed to become quaint.

Set that beside the language campaign and the shape of the op - eration becomes visible. The state went, hard and for sixty years, at exactly one thing: the barrier between an Okinawan child and a Japanese classroom. It did not go at the ritual year, the ancestral rites, the sacred places, the names of persons, or the household calendar, because none of those stood in the way of the classroom. There is a phrase for what was done to Korea in the same empire — the changing of names, the compulsory shrine attendance, the forced identification of two peoples as one body — and nothing of the kind was attempted here. The one visible attack on the person was the cutting of the katakashira, the adult male topknot, and even that appears in the record as something conscripts were doing themselves in 1898 rather than something ordered.

The state took the tongue and left the calendar. That is a narrow and very deliberate operation, and the narrowness is the finding.

Reading the formation against the framework

The prediction fails here, and the failure is worth more than a confirmation. The framework expects a colonial order to withhold

formation, because forming the conquered means admitting them, and expects the withholding to leave the old order holding the field. In Okinawa formation was not withheld. It was imposed — slowly at first for reasons of money and sovereignty, then hard after 1895 — and the old order did not hold the field, because the old order's own senior class had been arguing for two centuries that these were the same people anyway.

But it was imposed in one half and rationed in the other, and the two halves must be counted separately. On the identity side — the language, the school, the standard speech — the state pressed everything it had and was assisted, without asking, by the population itself. On the capacity side — the qualification that lets a man leave the prefecture and compete — it rationed, and a principal announced the ration to an assembled school as compassion for their unfortunate circumstances. The refinement this case offers is about what that combination produces: **where formation is offered on terms of common kinship rather than permanent difference, the conquered do not attack the formation; they attack the ration.** The middle school pupils of 1895 did not strike to be left alone. They struck to be taught English, and their strongest weapon was to threaten the school with emptiness. That is not what resistance looks like in an order that has told a native population it is a different kind of being.

The placard is the module's sharpest contribution and it is a warning about evidence. The most infamous instrument in the whole case — the one object everybody knows — was, on the best current scholarship, never ordered by anybody. No ordinance, no circular, almost nothing in the official files, and a settled practice of not discussing it openly. It was generated inside the schools and operated by children on each other, and it needed no adult supervision because a child could only take it off by informing on another. The framework already holds that the cost column is kept up by two enforcers, the state's arm and the community's praise and shame, and that the second works for free. Here the second enforcer performed the office of a policy the state never had to write. A

formation campaign will therefore be systematically understated by its own paper record, because its cheapest and most intimate instrument leaves no order to find — and a study that measures formation by counting decrees will report a milder regime than the one the children were in.

And the last finding is about who ends up defending it. By 1940, when intellectuals from the mainland came to Okinawa to argue that the Okinawan language should be preserved, the people of Okinawa mostly took the prefecture's side. They were not confused. They had correctly identified which of the two things on offer — a language or an exit from contempt — was the one being rationed, and they knew who was rationing it. Sixty years earlier a room in the government building had opened with the sons of the old offi - cialdom in it, learning to speak Japanese from clerks working overtime. What the state built in that room eventually became a thing the population would defend against people trying to take it away.

One matter this module leaves open. Everything above describes what was pressed on the conquered and what they reached for. It does not price it. What a household actually gave up to send a child to a school it could not afford, what the arrangement returned, and why a man who was losing by it got up and went to work for it, is the ledger — and that is the next thing to establish.

❧

A note on sources. Quoted exactly, in the original with translation: the ad - dress by the principal Kodama Kihachi to the Okinawa Prefectural Middle School in 1894, as it is transmitted in the Okinawa daihyakka jiten and re - produced in the Japanese reference literature. This study has not seen the wording in a contemporary document and gives it at one remove; it should be collated before a later module rests on it.

Paraphrased and credited: the establishment of the Conversation Train - ing Institute in February 1880 within the official quarters, the selection of its pupils from among the existing students of Shuri and Naha, its staffing by prefectural education-section officials in their spare hours, its materi - als, and its conversion into the normal school after four months, follow the

published work on Meiji-period education in Okinawa and the description of Okinawa taiwa held by the University of the Ryukyus rare-materials archive and the Okinawa Prefectural Archives; the textbook itself, published by the prefecture's education section in December 1880 in two volumes with standard Japanese and Shuri speech in parallel, is in the National Diet Library's digital collection.

The attendance figures are from two independent sources and should be treated as sound in outline and approximate in detail: the prefecture-level series for 1883 and 1899 — Okinawa lowest at 2.85 and 44.05 per cent, against Nagano at 71.51 and Nara at 89.44 — is from Annaka Susumu and Koizumi Takuto's panel study of Meiji enrolment; the Okinawa figures for 1893 and the immediate post-war years are as quoted in the published research on Meiji Okinawan education. National figures for 1877, 1887, 1895 and 1905, the effect of the 1886 school ordinance's fee provisions, and the abolition of fees in 1900, are from the Ministry of Education's own centennial history.

The middle school strike of 1895–96 — Kodama's arrival in 1894 and his attempt to abolish English, the compromise arranged by the vice-principal Shimokuni, the suspension of Shimokuni and dismissal of Tajima Risaburō in October 1895, the rolling withdrawal notices, the strike from 12 November, the formal recommendation that the principal resign, the expulsion of Kanna Kenwa, Teruya Hiroshi, Majikina Ankō, Yabiku Mōshō and Iha Fuyū, the newspaper campaign, the memorial to the Minister of Education, the tour urging non-enrolment, Kodama's dismissal in 1896, the refusal to readmit the leaders, and the subsequent careers of all six including Governor Narahara's assistance to Kanna and Yabiku's suicide — is drawn from the Japanese reference literature, which cites the Okinawa daihyakka jiten, Kinjō Seitoku's study of Iha Fuyū, Arashiro Toshiaki's history of Ryūkyū and Okinawa, and Hokama Shuzen's works on Iha. Matsuura Masako's article in the Ryūkyū Asia society and culture research series treats the same episode and its significance for Iha.

On the dialect placard: the revision of the date of first appearance from the conventional 1907 to 1903 at the latest is Kondō Ken'ichirō's, in his study of school commemorative volumes and in his essay on the appearance of the placard in modern Okinawa; the cases before 1911, the finding that no ordinance or directive was ever issued instructing its use, the characterisation of the instrument as customary, unofficial and semi-spontaneous, the periodisation into an ordinary-language phase from 1903 and a standard-language enforcement phase from 1937, the annual returns by principals of numbers caught and best classes, the discovery of the placard by Yanagi Sōetsu's circle in 1940, and the finding that the popula-

tion largely supported the prefecture against the mainland critics, are all Itani Yasuhiko's, from his published research on the placard and on Ok - inawan language education. The mechanism of transfer between pupils is as described in the Japanese reference literature and in the NHK broadcast documentation cited there. The assertion that the practice was imported from France is made in that literature without a route of transmission, and is reported here as an unverified claim.

On what was not done: the persistence of the lunar calendar for Ok - inawan observances after the calendar reform of 1873, and the attribution of the eventual disruption of those observances to the war and to postwar economic change rather than to the reform, follows the Okinawa prefec - tural tourism authority's account of the ritual year, which is a popular source and is used here for a matter on which it is not an interested party; a better source should be found. The absence of any prohibition of the sacred groves, any prosecution of the priestesses, any conversion cam - paign, and any name-changing programme on the Korean model, is a negative finding of this study's searching and is offered as provisional. The cutting of the topknot by conscripts in 1898 is from a Ryūkyū Shimpō des - patch of 11 October that year as reproduced in the Ryūkyū archive project's material.

MODULE 5

SIXTEEN BALES OUT OF EIGHTEEN

Module 5 — the cost column, 1879–1940: what the arrangement charged an ordinary household and what it returned, how much of the watching the conqueror built and how much he inherited, and the three exits — to China, to the Diet, and to the cane fields

A case study in the Patterns of Power series · Thomas J. Bryan with Claude (Anthropic) · held as tested, not revealed

One household's arithmetic

Nishizato Kama farmed at Fukuzato in the Sunagawa magiri on Miyako. His household was five people — himself, his wife, his eldest son and two hired men. In the year the figures were taken down, the whole of what his land produced was eighteen bales and two to: eight bales of millet, six of wheat, and the rest in sorghum, beans and sesame. What he owed the government in tribute millet was sixteen bales and two to.

His own statement of the position is preserved in the life of Gusukuma Seian:

> 一年の収穫をあげて悉く納めても、なお不足なるを以ってその不足分は全島民と共に、更に来年度まで延期を請願するつもりなり

Even if I give up the whole of a year's harvest and pay it all in, it is still short; so as to the shortfall, together with all the islanders, I intend to petition for a further postponement until next year.

That was the position of a Japanese subject in the 1890s, more than a decade after annexation, and it was entirely lawful. The levy under which he owed it had been imposed on Miyako and Yaeyama

in 1637 by the kingdom of Ryūkyū. It fell on every person between the ages of fifteen and fifty regardless of what they earned or whether they worked at all. It took no notice of a bad year, because it was not assessed on the harvest. And it had been preserved intact by the prefecture as one of the old customs.

Its proceeds were not a national tax and had nothing to do with the policies of the Japanese state. They supported the privileged class of the islands themselves — the local shizoku and officials — and Okinawa Prefecture, in the plain words of the reference literature, turned a blind eye to its being levied.

The watching the conqueror did not have to build

The framework treats surveillance as the tell of a belief that never took, and prices it. In this case the price is very low, and the reason is that almost none of the apparatus was new.

The levy of 1637 had come with its own enforcement built in and it did not require a policeman. Groups of five households were jointly liable for each other's default; if the group failed, the village was liable; if the village failed, the island was. What that produces is not a state watching a population but a population watching itself, at no cost to anybody in an office, with the incentive to inform running downward through every household on the island. Above it sat a class of local officials whose own income depended on the collection, and beneath it a servile status called nago, peasants held in effective bondage to the shizoku, which Gusukuma and Nakamura had to attack first and could only abolish by paying the local officials an allowance to accept it.

The conqueror inherited all of that in 1879 and kept it. What he added was small. A police headquarters was constituted at Naha on 24 September 1879, ten days after the leadership submitted its pledge of obedience. When the prefecture wanted a penalty for men slipping away to China, it did not write one: in 1885 it revived a portion of the abolished kingdom's own penal code, which allowed

up to five hundred days' imprisonment, extending it in 1886 to anti-government activity generally with economic sanctions and con - trols on assembly attached. The whole apparatus was suspended by the amnesty on the promulgation of the imperial constitution in 1889.

And the most effective instrument of all cost the state nothing and was never ordered by it. The mechanism by which Okinawan children were made to stop speaking their own language — the placard passed from one child to the next, removable only by in - forming on a classmate — was a school-level custom that appears almost nowhere in the official files. By 1940, when the language campaign had become part of the national mobilisation, principals were sending the prefecture an annual return on a set form: the number of pupils caught, and the best-performing classes. That is a surveillance return, filed by teachers, on children, about speech, and it was compiled from work done by the children themselves.

The same technique had been turned the other way once. In the summer of 1879 the Ryūkyūan leadership stopped the prefecture's administration by having village and island officials collect blood-sealed pledges of non-cooperation from the ordinary people. Both sides in that contest used the identical instrument, because it was the instrument the country already ran on.

The exit to China, and what it was priced at

The first exit was northwest across the water, and it was used from the beginning.

Men left for Fuzhou to petition the Qing court on behalf of the abolished kingdom. Of thirty-one petitions eventually laid before the Qing government, twenty-eight fall between 1879 and 1885. The prefecture's response moved through three stages. In the earliest years returnees were detained, and the first recorded death under interrogation occurred in June 1879 in connection with unauthor - ised travel. From about 1882 detentions stopped and returnees were

merely questioned. Then in 1885 Governor Nishimura pressed for a penalty and the kingdom's own code was brought back to supply one.

The exit did not close when the political cause died. When conscription finally reached Okinawa in 1898, the old Ryūkyū residence at Fuzhou — the kingdom's trading and diplomatic house in China — became a base for men avoiding the draft and for their businesses, and it remained one until 1937. Thirty-nine years after the kingdom was abolished, its embassy in China was still functioning, as a hostel for young men who did not want to be Japanese soldiers.

The exit to Tokyo, and what it cost the people who took it

The second exit was the one nobody in the framework's usual repertoire would predict: the conquered went to the conqueror's parliament, and won.

Gusukuma Seian was born at Kumoji in Naha in 1860, in the kingdom's last years, and became a sugar technician; he made the first refined brown sugar in Okinawa. In 1884 he was posted to Miyako as sugar instructor, and could not watch what the levy was doing. In November 1892 Nakamura Jūsaku arrived on the same island — twenty-five years old, fifth son of a village headman at Inamasu in Echigo, lately out of the navy, educated at the Tokyo Senmon Gakkō, and there to farm pearls. What he found instead, on his own account, was the poverty and the contempt the levy produced and the arrogance of the class that lived on it.

They began with the nago and got the servile status abolished. Emboldened by that, the Miyako peasantry in 1893 reduced their case to three demands and petitioned the prefectural office and the island office: cut the number of local officials, replace the head levy with the ordinary land tax, and let payment be made in money rather than in kind. Neither office moved.

So they went to Tokyo. The delegation was Gusukuma, Nakamura, and two peasants of the Sunagawa magiri — Taira Maushi of Bora village and Nishizato Kama of Fukuzato, the man whose harvest is set out above. Nakamura paid by spending the capital of his pearl business. Gusukuma, Taira and Nishizato paid by selling their fields. The shizoku and the island officials used the police to obstruct them and threatened the two peasant delegates to stop them sailing, and did not succeed.

In Tokyo they were helped by Nakamura's younger brother Jūichirō and by Masuda Giichi, a Yomiuri reporter from the next village to Nakamura's own, who put the injustice of the levy into the newspapers. The petition for abolition went to the Imperial Diet — submitted in 1894 on the standard account, with some sources dating the decisive parliamentary resolution to 1895 — and it was carried.

The levy was actually abolished in January 1903: two hundred and sixty-six years after it was imposed, and twenty-four years after the Japanese state took possession of the people paying it.

Two things about that episode ought to be held together without either cancelling the other. The first is that the burden was the old kingdom's, that the Japanese prefecture had preserved it deliber - ately, and that it went on being collected for a generation under a flag that had promised in its own founding oath to break the base customs of former times. The second is that the instrument which finally lifted it was the metropole's — a national parliament and a national press, neither of which had existed in 1879 — and that it was pulled by two Miyako farmers who sold their land for the fare. On Miyako today Nakamura Jūsaku is honoured as a god, under the name Yamato-gami, and there are verses about him in the island's own ayagu songs.

The exit overseas

The third exit was the biggest, and it came out of the wreckage of the fight over the land.

Tōyama Kyūzō was born in 1868 at Namisato in the Kin magiri, into a commoner household. He went up to Tokyo in 1898, could not find steady work, and in a second-hand bookshop came across a volume on colonisation which convinced him that emigration was the answer to Okinawa's food and population problem; he also made the acquaintance of Tanaka Shōzō, the campaigner against the Ashio copper poisoning, and got from him what was known about the Hawaii emigration already running from the mainland. In Tokyo he also met Jahana Noboru, and the two of them founded the political society called the Okinawa Club. They returned to - gether in March 1899, and Tōyama worked on the club's paper, the Okinawa Jiron, attacking Governor Narahara's administration.

Within the year the land campaign was lost and Jahana was on his way to ruin. On 5 December 1899 the first party of Okinawan emigrants — twenty-six on some counts, twenty-seven on others — sailed from Naha, boarded the China at Yokohama, reached Hon - olulu on 7 or 8 January 1900, and began work as contract labourers in the cane fields of Oahu under overseers the plantations called luna.

The same political circle produced both movements, and when the first was defeated the second was what remained. It is worth saying plainly: the men who could not get the villages' forest back organised the departure of the villages instead.

The scale it reached is the hardest number in this module. Between 1899 and 1938, 72,134 people left Okinawa for destinations overseas — about twelve per cent of the prefecture's population as it stood in 1940. Between 1923 and 1930, one in every ten emigrants leaving Japan was Okinawan, from a prefecture holding rather un - der one per cent of the country's people. And the money they sent home reached, at its peak, more than sixty per cent of the prefecture's annual revenue.

That last figure should be read twice. For a period, the largest single source of funds keeping Okinawa solvent was money earned by Okinawans who had left it.

The cycad years

What drove them out in those numbers is dated precisely.

Sugar was the only cash crop, and about seventy per cent of the prefecture's people farmed; the average holding was around seven tan and more than half the households worked less than five. During the European war the sugar price roughly tripled, and there were men in Okinawa called sugar millionaires. When Europe recovered and Japan fell into the post-war depression, the price collapsed onto a prefecture that had nothing else.

In 1919 the proportion of taxpayers in arrears in Okinawa was 0.3 per cent. In 1921 it was 47.4 per cent.

People who could not get rice, and then could not get sweet potato, ate cycad. It had been planted since the eighteenth century as a famine reserve and its pith and seed contain starch, but it is poisonous and will kill if it is not washed and prepared correctly, and people died of it. The name the decade carries in Okinawa is sotetsu jigoku — cycad hell. Municipal finances broke; officials and teachers went unpaid; banks failed; and the standard Japanese reference works record, in the same sentence as the emigration figures, the selling of human beings.

Then in 1930 the world slump arrived on top of it.

The exit to Osaka, and its price

Those who could not afford a passage to Hawaii went to the mainland, and most of them went to one place.

Taishō ward in Osaka had the docks and the factories and a regular steamer service from Naha. Okinawan men unloaded ships and hawked sawdust and scrap iron; Okinawan women went into the spinning mills. Those without housing built shacks out of scavenged timber on the reclaimed marshland at one edge of the ward, which they called kubungwā, the hollow, and which the neighbours called the Okinawa slum. In employment there was open discrimination, and on lodgings and rented houses, as the

reference literature and the Okinawan press both record, notices refusing Ryūkyūans were unremarkable — alongside identical no - tices refusing Koreans, who settled a few wards away in Ikuno.

And there is one detail in the recollections that prices the whole arrangement better than any figure. The music that Okinawa is now known for — the sanshin, the dances — was played in Osaka in those years under a quilt, to muffle the sound, and performed only when close kin were present.

A man who leaves an arrangement he cannot afford, and finds that the condition of the place he has escaped to is that he must smother his own instrument, has told you what both columns held.

What the benefit column actually contained

It is not empty, and pretending otherwise would falsify the ledger.

By the end of 1903 an ordinary Okinawan farmer held, for the first time in the history of the islands, a registered private title to the ground he worked, which he could sell, mortgage or leave to his son. The per-capita levy on Miyako and Yaeyama was gone. There was a school he could send a child to, if he could spare the child. From 1898 there was a conscription obligation, which is a cost, but which was also the only route by which an Okinawan had ever been able to hold a commission. From 1899 there was a lawful way out, and after 1912 there was a vote.

Every one of those items arrived within a few years of each other, and none of them arrived as a gift. The land settlement was a rev - enue measure run by the Finance Ministry, and its by-product was ownership. The levy went because two farmers sold their land for a ticket to Tokyo. The exit was organised by a man whose political society the governor was at that moment destroying. The vote came in 1912, thirty-three years after annexation and twenty-two years after the Diet first sat.

What the state gave, it mostly gave because someone had gone to considerable expense to ask.

Reading the cost column against the framework

A preserved order arrives with its surveillance already installed, and that is a large part of what "cheap" means. The framework holds that surveillance is the tell of a belief that never took, and expects to find it in the conqueror's establishment and his budget. In Okinawa it is not there, because he did not have to build it. He inherited a levy whose enforcement ran through five-household joint liability, village liability and island liability; a class of local officials paid out of what they collected; and a servile status that put peasants at their disposal. When he needed a criminal penalty in 1885 he took one from the abolished kingdom's code. When he needed the language campaign enforced he did not need to do anything, because the schools generated the instrument themselves and the children operated it. **Where a conqueror preserves the conquered order, he inherits its watching along with its tax base, and none of it will appear in his accounts.** An assessment of how closely a colonial population was watched that counts the conqueror's policemen will be wrong, and wrong in the direction of leniency.

The exit remains the best available reading of the ledger, and here it was taken at a scale that leaves no room for interpretation. Twelve per cent of the population departed overseas in forty years. In the worst decade one in every ten emigrants leaving Japan came from a prefecture holding less than one per cent of its people. Remittances from those who had gone exceeded sixty per cent of the prefecture's revenue. Four people sold their fields to buy a passage to Tokyo to complain. Others crossed to a foreign empire's port to avoid conscription, thirty-nine years after that empire had stopped protecting them. **What people paid to be elsewhere is the price they had put on staying**, and this population paid the full rate, repeatedly, in three directions at once, for two generations.

And the benefit column can be filled by the conquered, using the conqueror's own institutions, against the thing the conqueror

preserved. This is the finding this module did not expect and it may be the most useful thing in it. The framework asks whether the order fills the benefit column or merely raises the cost of leaving. Okinawa shows a third possibility. The Japanese state imported into the prefecture a national parliament, a national press and a right of petition — instruments that had not existed anywhere in Japan in 1879 — and then discovered that the first use the conquered made of them was to attack the old custom the state had gone out of its way to keep. **Where a conquering state exports its own metropolitan institutions into a colony, it exports a lever the conquered can pull, and the first thing they will pull it against is whatever the conqueror preserved.** That is a real cost of the cheap option, and it should be entered against it: a preserved order is cheap to run and indefensible in a parliament, because it has no justification except that it was already there.

The corollary is about affordability, and it is not comfortable. The metropole's own population crossed from the expensive pole to the cheap one inside a generation — school fees abolished in 1900, attendance past ninety per cent by 1902, literacy given a market value — because the state could pay for it. In Okinawa the equivalent items arrived between 1898 and 1912, and the state's contribution to most of them was to stop obstructing. **Where a state demonstrably could fill a particular population's benefit column and did not, the omission was affordable, and being affordable it was a choice** — and the twenty-four years between the taking of the islands and the ending of a levy the state itself described as an old custom is the length of that choice, measured in the years of Nishizato Kama's working life.

One thing this module has only priced from below. It has established what the arrangement charged a household. What it actually produced, where the surplus went, who shipped it and who banked it, is the other half of the same account, and it is what comes next.

A note on sources. Quoted exactly, in the original with translation: Nishizato Kama's statement of his household's position, as it is transmitted in the Life of Gusukuma Seian and reproduced in the Okinawan local-history literature. This study has not seen the biography itself and gives the passage, and the accompanying figures for the Nishizato household's harvest and tribute obligation, at one remove; they should be collated before being relied on further, and the reader should note that a single household's return, however vivid, is not a distribution.

Paraphrased and credited: the character of the per-capita assessment on Miyako and Yaeyama, its imposition in 1637, its application to all persons between fifteen and fifty, its collection for the benefit of the islands' own privileged class rather than as a national tax, and the prefecture's connivance at it, follow the Ryūkyū Shimpō's Okinawa Compact Encyclopedia and the account published by Jōetsu City, Nakamura Jūsaku's birthplace. The joint liability of groups of five households, of villages and of islands is as described in the Japanese reference literature on the levy, and is treated with the caution entered in an earlier module — that specialists including Sunakawa Genshō have questioned how far the head-tax framing is an artefact of the Meiji government's own survey of old fiscal custom rather than a description of the seventeenth-century instrument.

The abolition campaign — Gusukuma Seian's posting to Miyako in 1884, Nakamura Jūsaku's arrival in November 1892, the attack on the nago status and the allowances paid to local officials to secure it, the three demands of 1893 and their rejection by both the prefectural and the island office, the journey to Tokyo, the sale of fields and of Nakamura's business capital to pay for it, the obstruction by shizoku and police and the threats to the peasant delegates, the assistance of Nakamura Jūichirō and the Yomiuri reporter Masuda Giichi, the petition to the Imperial Diet and its passage, and the abolition in January 1903 — is drawn from the Japanese reference literature and from the municipal materials published by Jōetsu City and Itakura. Sources differ on whether the petition was submitted in 1893 or 1894 and on whether the decisive Diet resolution belongs to 1894 or 1895; the abolition date of January 1903 is consistent across them. Nakamura's veneration on Miyako as Yamato-gami and his commemoration in the island's ayagu are as reported in those materials.

On emigration: Tōyama Kyūzō's birth in 1868 at Namisato in Kin, his journey to Tokyo in 1898, the book on colonisation, his acquaintance with Tanaka Shōzō, his partnership with Jahana Noboru in founding the Okinawa Club and his work on the Okinawa Jiron, follow the Japanese reference literature, which notes that some sources date his removal to Tokyo to 1896. The departure of 5 December 1899, the transfer at

Yokohama to the China, the arrival at Honolulu on 7 or 8 January 1900 and the employment on Oahu under overseers called luna are from the Okinawa Prefectural Archives and the Okinawa Prefectural Library; the party is given as twenty-six by the Archives and twenty-seven by the Library and by the academic literature, and both figures are reported here. The total of 72,134 emigrants for 1899–1938 against a 1940 prefectural population of 574,579 is from Lee Jinhee's study of Okinawan self-representation; the estimate that one in ten of Japan's emigrants between 1923 and 1930 came from Okinawa is from the popular historical literature and has not been checked against the passport returns; the statement that remittances at one point exceeded sixty per cent of prefectural revenue is the Okinawa Prefectural Archives' own.

On the cycad years: the tax-arrears figures of 0.3 per cent in 1919 and 47.4 per cent in 1921, and the tripling of the sugar price during the European war, are from the popular historical literature and would benefit from a documentary check. The proportion of the population in farming, the average holding of about seven tan, the majority of households below five tan, the character of cycad as a famine food requiring careful preparation, and the collapse of municipal finances, unpaid salaries, bank failures and human trafficking are as recorded in the standard Japanese encyclopedias.

On Osaka: the concentration in Taishō ward, the work at the docks and in the spinning mills, the shack settlement on reclaimed marsh known as kubungwā, the discrimination in employment, and the commonplace notices refusing Ryūkyūans on lodgings and rented houses, are from the Nihon Keizai Shimbun's account and from Okinawan press material derived from the Okinawa Times's thirtieth-anniversary series; this study has read the latter only through secondary reproduction, some of it on sites whose framing is hostile, and has used it only for particulars on which the reputable sources agree. The detail of the sanshin played under a quilt is from that material and is offered as testimony rather than as established fact.

MODULE 6

THIRTY YEARS, AND THEN THE LAND

Module 6 — extraction, 1879–1945: what the islands actually produced and who took it, the instruments that replaced the old ones, the labour that was never paid, the commodity that turned out to be the population itself, and the island group a sugar company owned outright

A case study in the Patterns of Power series · Thomas J. Bryan with Claude (Anthropic) · held as tested, not revealed

There was only one thing to take

Okinawa is coral limestone with thin soil, no metals worth the name, and a typhoon season. About seven in ten of its people farmed; the average holding was around seven tan and more than half of households worked less than five. There was one crop that could be turned into money and shipped, and it was sugar.

That single fact governs everything in this module. A colony with one commodity is not merely poor; it is a colony whose entire extractive relationship can be adjusted by moving a single price, and whose whole population can be ruined by a decision taken elsewhere about something else.

What the old order had taken, and what the new one gave up

The instruments the Japanese state inherited in 1879 are named in the reform files, and they are worth setting down because the pre-

fecture abolished some of them and kept others, and the pattern of what it kept is legible.

Under the kingdom's system, as the drafting materials for the reform proposals of around 1890 describe it, the ordinary farmer was regarded as a tenant of the government. What the government took from him came in four forms: the compulsory purchase of his sugar at a price the government set; corvée labour rendered in person; a levy in forest produce; and, in the southern islands, the per-capita assessment.

The reforms that followed the abolition of the domain raised the price paid for the bought-up sugar, ended the corvée rendered in kind, and ended the forest-produce levy — and the documents re - cord that the peasantry gained happiness by it while the shizoku, losing their official stipends and their prospect of house income, did not. The per-capita levy, alone of the four, was kept, and it was kept for twenty-four years.

So the new conqueror's first act on extraction was to reduce it. That is not generosity and should not be read as such: the three things he abolished were the three that fed the local aristocracy rather than the treasury, and the one he preserved was the one that would have cost him a fight with that aristocracy to remove. What he was doing was not lightening the load. He was changing who stood underneath it.

The instrument of the settled phase

Once the arrangement was settled, the state stopped taking the crop and began taxing it, and the crop itself passed into private hands that were not Okinawan.

From about 1882, merchants from other prefectures — chiefly Osaka and Kagoshima — established themselves in the islands and came close to monopolising the trade in rice and in sugar. They financed farmers against crops not yet cut, which is the ordinary mechanism by which a merchant with capital acquires a producer without capital. The shipping between Naha and the mainland ran

on the same traffic. An Agricultural and Industrial Bank was chartered for the prefecture at the end of the 1890s, and the Naha newspapers of 1899 carried its lending procedures and reports of the briskness of its business alongside notices about the land settlement.

And the land settlement is the hinge. Before 1899 a farmer held a turn in a village rotation: he could not sell it, could not pledge it, and could not lose it to a creditor, because it was not a thing. The Land Rearrangement Act made him the owner of the plot he was working, and in doing so made that plot saleable, mortgageable and forfeitable for the first time in the history of the islands.

That is the point at which a debt to a sugar merchant can become his field.

The metropole's own cut

In March 1901 the Sugar Consumption Tax Law came into force. It taxed black sugar at one yen per hundred kin, and it graded sugar for duty by colour, against the Dutch Standard samples that an Amsterdam sugar merchant had devised in 1840: the blacker the sugar the lower the rate, on the reasoning that dark sugar was the common people's article and white sugar a luxury.

The National Tax Agency's own historical account adds a second reason for the light rate on black sugar — that it was intended to protect the small producers of Okinawa and elsewhere. The Okinawan producers' account of what happened is different. On the black-sugar cooperative's telling, the Naha sugar market fell after the tax came in, farmers' incomes fell with it, and the prefecture's sugar industry went into crisis. The rate was subsequently raised, squeezing producers further, and when the price collapsed after the European war the prefecture's representatives petitioned the government to reduce and then to abolish it.

Set the two accounts beside one another without adjudicating between them, because both are true in their own registers. It was the gentlest rate in the schedule. It was also an excise levied by the

metropole on the one thing the prefecture made, in a year when nearly half that prefecture's taxpayers would shortly be in arrears.

And the competitor the metropole had just bought

The harder fact is what the same government was doing with the same commodity somewhere else.

Japan took Taiwan in 1895. It recovered tariff autonomy in 1899. From about 1900 it put state money into building a modern sugar industry in Taiwan — cane grown on flat ground, cut and carried to large mills, milled by centrifugal process into the separated sugar that refineries want.

The efficiency gap is the whole story in one pair of numbers. The small cooperative mills that Okinawan farmers ran between them, driven by animals or a small engine, extracted between fifty and sixty per cent of the juice from the cane. A large centrifugal mill extracted about ninety. Okinawa applied to the government in 1906 for assistance to convert, and the first centrifugal mill in the prefecture was built in 1909.

Fourteen years, then, in which the metropole taxed the older colony's sugar and capitalised the newer colony's, while the older one milled at half the yield. A prefecture with one crop had that crop undercut by a state decision about a different island, and there was nothing in its position that allowed it to answer.

The labour nobody paid for

Corvée did not end in 1879. What ended was the corvée rendered against the tax; the labour by which villagers maintained the common forest — cutting, protecting and replanting the somayama they used — continued until Governor Narahara's special disposal regulations of 1906 converted the forest into state land in form as well as fact. The corvée was then abolished and replaced by a tax, which had the effect of excluding the villagers from the woodland

they had been maintaining for nothing, after which much of it ceased to be managed at all and degraded.

The villagers had paid for that forest for generations in labour. When the labour was commuted to money, the asset went to the state and its better ground was sold to nobles, outside merchants and senior officials.

The island a company owned

The clearest extraction in the prefecture happened on ground where there was nobody to hide it from, and it should be set out at length because it shows the logic with the disguise removed.

The Daitō Islands lie about three hundred and sixty kilometres east of Okinawa. They were uninhabited. Japan annexed them in 1885. Tamaoki Han'emon had made a fortune selling albatross feathers and had lost it when the albatross were hunted to extinc - tion, and he turned to the Daitō. His sailing ship Kaiyō-maru left Hachijō Island on 23 November 1899, reached Naha on 22 Decem - ber, and on 23 January 1900, after repeated failures against the cliffs, landed twenty-three men at what is now the west port of Minami-Daitō.

The terms on which he had recruited them were these: he would meet the costs of settlement and their living expenses, and after thirty years the settlers would be given the land.

What he built instead was this. Tamaoki Shōkai owned the island. It ran the only transport to it, the shops, the school, the post office, the hospital. It issued its own paper money for use on the island and would not permit Bank of Japan notes to circulate at all. By special exception the Town and Village System — the law that gave every other community in Japan a municipal government — was not brought into force there; the island's administration was del - egated entirely to the company, Japanese governmental organs did not reach it, and even the making of an official registration was in practice impossible. The reference literature calls it a shayūtō: a company-owned island. Its policemen were of the pre-war category

called petition constables, requested by a private party who paid their salaries, and the private party was the company.

Apart from a handful of managerial staff, every person on the is - land was a tenant farmer delivering cane to the sugar company that owned the ground beneath him. He was worked hard, the cane was bought from him at prices the buyer set, and he was forbidden to leave the island without permission and watched to see that he did not.

In 1903 company employees landed on Kita-Daitō and planted eight stools of cane. That island's principal business became phos - phate, and its mine drew labourers from the Japanese mainland, from other islands of Okinawa, and from Taiwan; when the mine closed they left, and almost nothing of them remains but the ruin of a bath-house. Okidaitō, the third island, was owned outright by Rasa Industries, which mined its phosphate.

On 1 May 1916 Tamaoki Shōkai sold Minami and Kita Daitō to the Tōyō Sugar Company. On 29 July 1927 Tōyō Sugar was absorbed by Dai Nippon Sugar in the financial panic of that year. The scrip went on being issued through the changes of ownership. On 20 February 1928, at the sixteenth general election — the first held under uni - versal manhood suffrage — the islanders were given the vote for the House of Representatives, but not for the prefectural assembly.

Village government came to the Daitō Islands on 12 June 1946, after the United States military government confiscated Dai Nippon Sugar's land, assets and stores in their entirety. Even then the land itself remained the sugar company's. It was not until 30 July 1964, by the ruling of Paul W. Caraway, the third High Commissioner of the Ryukyu Islands, that the ownership of their land by the people of Minami-Daitō was recognised, and the company's rule over the island held to be at an end.

The promise made in 1899 was thirty years. It was kept, by an American lieutenant general, after sixty-four.

The estate that outlived the empire

One holding from the sugar period is still producing income, and the shape of it is worth recording exactly.

The Okinawa Land and Housing Company, of Naha, owns some 1.15 million tsubo — about three hundred and eighty hectares — inside the Kadena Ammunition Storage Area, which is close to thirty per cent of all the private land within it. Its principal income is the rent the Ministry of Defence pays for that ground. The company's ownership there derives from the Okinawa Sugar Company and, before that, from the pre-war Tainan Sugar Company.

In the 1990s, two hundred and two people who had lived on and farmed that land before the war formed themselves into an association of former tenants of the old Okinawa Sugar Company and went to law, arguing that their leasehold rights had survived the American requisition. On 26 October 1993 the Naha branch of the Fukuoka High Court upheld the dismissal of their claim, holding that when the United States acquired the tenancy and took possession, their leasehold was extinguished.

A colonial sugar estate became a military landlord's rent-roll. The corporate successor collects. The people who worked it were told that their tenancy died in the occupation.

What was actually exported

And now the figure that reframes the whole module.

Between 1899 and 1938, 72,134 people left Okinawa for destinations overseas — roughly twelve per cent of the prefecture's population. Between 1923 and 1930, one in every ten emigrants leaving Japan came from a prefecture holding well under one per cent of Japan's people. They cut cane in Hawaii under overseers the plantations called luna; they went to the Philippines, to Peru, Brazil and Argentina, to New Caledonia, to Micronesia, to Taiwan; and, in the years after the sugar price collapsed, to the docks and the spinning mills of Osaka.

The money they sent back reached, at its peak, more than sixty per cent of the prefecture's annual revenue.

That is the largest measurable flow in the whole extractive relationship, and it runs the wrong way. Okinawa's most valuable export was not sugar. It was Okinawans — sold as labour to plantations that were mostly not Japanese, working for wages that were mostly not Japanese, in order to send home the money that kept a Japanese prefecture from insolvency during a famine.

Reading extraction against the framework

The extractable asset was the population, and the flow reverses. The framework's extraction module looks for the commodity, the route and the ledger — what is taken out of the colony and who books the proceeds. In Okinawa the commodity was worth so little, and was undercut so quickly, that the asset which actually mattered was people, and the proceeds arrived as remittances from third countries. **Where a colony's ground yields too little to be worth working, the extractable asset becomes the population itself, and the metropole's gain is negative rather than positive: it exports the mouths and lets somebody else's plantation feed them, while the wages come back to pay the taxes.** That transaction appears nowhere in the metropole's colonial accounts, because nothing was shipped and nothing was sold. It is invisible to every instrument this method normally uses, and it was the largest thing happening.

In the settled phase the instrument is not the levy but the market and the mortgage, and proprietorship is one of its parts. The state gave up compulsory purchase, corvée and the forest levy, and replaced them with an excise, a merchant class from the metropole holding the credit, and a statute that turned every farmer into an owner. The last of those reads as emancipation and functions as machinery: a rotating turn in a village cannot be foreclosed, and a registered freehold can. **Making a peasant a proprietor is an extractive instrument as well as a liberating one, and its extractive**

character is invisible precisely because the moment of transfer looks like a gift.

A metropole with two colonies will not protect the older one's single commodity from the newer one's. Japan taxed Okinawan black sugar from 1901 and capitalised Taiwanese centrifugal sugar from about 1900, leaving Okinawa milling at fifty to sixty per cent yield until 1909. The prefecture had no answer, because it had nothing else to sell and no standing in which to object. **A colony reduced to one crop is hostage not to the world price but to the metropole's next acquisition** — and the framework should expect the sharpest deterioration in an old possession's terms of trade to date from the year a new one was taken.

And Daitō is the limit case: it should be kept as one, and read as one. Nothing in the structure of the Japanese state prevented a private company from owning an island group inside a prefecture for forty-six years, issuing its own money, excluding the national currency, paying the police, running the school and the post office, buying the crop from its own tenants at prices it set, and forbidding them to leave. It happened because there was nobody there to be persuaded of anything. **Where a conqueror takes ground with no population on it, the extraction has no reason to be disguised at all** — and the arrangement he builds there is the best available statement of what the disguise elsewhere was concealing, because it is the same operation with the robe taken off.

One thing this module has assumed rather than shown. It has described what was taken and by whom, on the basis of records kept by the takers. What could be said about it at the time, in which newspaper, to which audience, and what happened to people who said it, is a separate question — and it is what comes next.

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A note on sources. Paraphrased and credited: the characterisation of the pre-1879 fiscal instruments — the farmer as a tenant of the government, the compulsory purchase of sugar, the corvée rendered in kind, the forest-produce levy — and the record that the reforms raised the bought-up sugar

price and ended the corvée and the forest levy while the shizoku lost their stipends, follow Uechi Ichirō's 2013 study in Takaoka Hōgaku of the 1899 land settlement, which quotes the reform-proposal materials of around 1890. This study has read those materials only through his article.

The Sugar Consumption Tax Law of March 1901 at one yen per hundred kin of black sugar, its subsequent increases and the prefecture's petitions for reduction and abolition after the European war, are from the Ryūkyū Shimpō's Okinawa Compact Encyclopedia. The grading of sugar for duty by the Dutch Standard colour samples, and the statement that the low rate on black sugar was intended partly to protect small producers in Okinawa, are the National Tax Agency's own, from the National Tax College's historical materials. The account of the tax's effect on the Naha market and on farmers' incomes, the application for conversion assistance in 1906, the first centrifugal mill in 1909, and the extraction rates of fifty to sixty per cent for small mills against about ninety for large centrifugal plants, are from the Okinawa Prefectural Black Sugar Cooperative's published history and from the academic literature on post-war Okinawan sugar technology; the cooperative is an interested party and is used here for particulars rather than for judgement.

The kiryū shōnin and their command of the rice and sugar trades from about 1882 are as reported in the reference literature; the Agricultural and Industrial Bank's charter and lending are from the index to the Naha City History documentary volumes for 1898 and 1899. The mortgageability created by the Land Rearrangement Act is inferred from the Act's own terms rather than from a study of foreclosures, and the inference should be tested against the prefecture's land-transfer records before a later module relies on it.

On the Daitō Islands: the annexation of 1885, Tamaoki Han'emon's albatross-feather fortune and its collapse, the voyage of the Kaiyō-maru from Hachijō on 23 November 1899, the arrival at Naha on 22 December and the landing of twenty-three men on 23 January 1900, the recruitment promise of costs met and land after thirty years, the issue of Daitō Island scrip and the exclusion of Bank of Japan notes, the company's control of transport, shops, school, post office and hospital, the special exemption from the Town and Village System, the delegation of administration to the company, the impossibility of official registration, the petition constables paid by the company, the status of the inhabitants as tenants delivering cane at prices the company set, the prohibition on leaving without permission, the first planting on Kita-Daitō in 1903 and its phosphate industry with labour from the mainland, Okinawa and Taiwan, Rasa Industries' ownership of Okidaitō, the sale to Tōyō Sugar on 1 May 1916 and the absorption into Dai

Nippon Sugar on 29 July 1927, the grant of the parliamentary but not the prefectural franchise at the election of 20 February 1928, the confiscation by the United States military government and the introduction of village government on 12 June 1946, and High Commissioner Paul W. Caraway's ruling of 30 July 1964 recognising the islanders' ownership, are drawn from the Japanese reference literature and from the chronology published by Kita-Daitō village. The village chronology is a primary compilation by the community concerned and is the best of these sources; the rest agree with it in substance. This study has not examined the company's own records, which would be the proper basis for any statement about prices paid for cane.

The Kadena holding — some 1.15 million tsubo, close to thirty per cent of the private land in the ammunition storage area, derived from the Ok - inawa Sugar Company and the pre-war Tainan Sugar Company, and the dismissal on 26 October 1993 by the Naha branch of the Fukuoka High Court of the claim brought by two hundred and two former tenants — is from the Japanese reference literature on the present-day company and has not been checked against the judgment itself.

The emigration figures repeat those given in the previous module and carry the same cautions: 72,134 for 1899–1938 is from Lee Jinhee's study; the estimate that one in ten of Japan's emigrants between 1923 and 1930 was Okinawan is from the popular historical literature and is unverified against the passport returns; the statement that remittances at their peak exceeded sixty per cent of prefectural revenue is the Okinawa Prefectural Archives'.

MODULE 7

DEALT WITH AS SPIES

Module 7 — information and suppression, 1609–2007: the censor that existed and was not needed, the newspaper the deposed king's son ran against his own people, the opposition paper that vanished without being banned, and the two occasions on which the record itself was edited

A case study in the Patterns of Power series · Thomas J. Bryan with Claude (Anthropic) · held as tested, not revealed

The machinery existed and was in constant use

There is no technical alibi available in this case, and that is what makes it worth running.

The Meiji state built a censorship apparatus almost before it built anything else. A publication ordinance in 1869; a press decree in October 1873; a libel law and a press ordinance in June 1875, promulgated as Council of State notifications in direct reaction to the Freedom and People's Rights Movement; a further publication ordinance in September 1875 moving the machinery to the Home Ministry; tightenings in 1883 and 1887; and eventually the Peace Preservation Law of 1925. It prosecuted editors, fined them, imprisoned them and closed their papers, continuously, for fifty years.

So when this study asks what the Japanese public was told about Okinawa and finds that the question of suppression barely arises, the answer cannot be that nobody had built a censor. The censor was in the next room, working overtime, on other people.

The paper the king's son ran

Okinawa's first newspaper appeared on 15 September 1893. It was called the Ryūkyū Shimpō, it came out every other day, four pages, from an office at 123 Nishimura in Naha, and its circulation was under five hundred at the start and about a thousand by 1900.

Its president was Shō Jun, Prince Matsuyama — the fourth son of Shō Tai, the last king of Ryūkyū. Its editorial direction was Ōta Chōfu's. Its principal figures were Takamine Chōkyō and Goeku Chōi, young men in their twenties out of the old shizoku class, several of them from the same small cohort the prefecture had sent to Tokyo on scholarships in 1882.

Its declared founding purpose was assimilation: to make Okinawans Japanese nationally and completely. The reasoning behind that purpose was not sentimental and should be stated as its founders stated it — Okinawan society had been taken over by merchants from other prefectures, and the only route by which Okinawans could take it back was to become indistinguishable from the people who held the country. The paper was known afterwards as the organ of the ruling class.

What it did with that position is the module's first finding. It suppressed the Okinawan people's-rights movement — Jahana Noboru's campaign for the land settlement and the franchise — in concert with the fourth governor, Narahara Shigeru. Ōta Masahide's entry on the paper in the Okinawa encyclopaedia puts its longevity down to two things: its proprietors were wealthy, and its editorial policy accommodated the prefectural authorities and put down the popular-rights movement. In 1940, when Yanagi Sōetsu and the folk-crafts people came from the mainland to argue that the Okinawan language should be preserved, the Ryūkyū Shimpō took the prefectural government's side and campaigned for standard Japanese.

The son of the king Japan deposed ran the newspaper that helped Japan's governor break the movement for an Okinawan vote.

The paper that vanished without being banned

Against it stood the Okinawa Jiron, founded in 1899 as the organ of the Okinawa Club — Jahana Noboru and Tōyama Kyūzō's society, with its three planks of criticism of the prefectural administration, the land settlement, and the franchise. Jahana had joined the Constitutional Party that year; the Jiron was where he wrote.

Almost none of it survives. For most of a century the only issue widely known was number 27, of 1900, in the Amano Tetsuo collection at the Okinawa Prefectural Library, and the contents of the rest were reconstructed from the advertisements the Jiron had placed in the Ryūkyū Shimpō. A copy of the very first issue was located by chance around 2019 in a Japanese municipal library, where it had been catalogued as a book rather than as a periodical, in the course of research on Narahara and Jahana; a facsimile is now held at the University of the Ryukyus.

No censor destroyed the Okinawa Jiron. Nobody prosecuted it. It lost — its founder was defeated in a bank election, ruined, and broke down at Kobe station in 1901 — and after it lost, nobody kept it. That is how an opposition disappears from a colonial archive, and it is a warning about method: **an absence of dissenting sources is not evidence of an absence of dissent.** What survives is what the winning faction had the money and the institutions to preserve, and in Okinawa the winning faction owned the printing press.

What happened when Okinawa did reach the metropole

The transmission was not blocked, and it is important to establish that with cases rather than assertion.

In the summer of 1898 Jahana went to Tokyo and obtained an interview with Itagaki Taisuke — the leader of the Freedom and People's Rights Movement, and at that moment the Home Minister of Japan — and put to him the case for removing Narahara. He got a

private undertaking. In November the first Ōkuma cabinet fell, the undertaking lapsed with it, and Narahara, who had extracted a promise from Itō and Matsukata before taking the post that he would not be moved part-way, served sixteen years.

The message reached the head of the ministry that governed the prefecture. It was defeated by a change of cabinet.

The head-tax campaign, running in the same years, reached further and won. Two Miyako farmers, a Naha sugar technician and a man from Echigo sold their fields, got past their own island's police, and in Tokyo found a Yomiuri reporter who put the levy in the paper and a route into the Imperial Diet; the petition carried and the levy went in 1903. So the metropolitan channel worked. What is instructive is what it worked on: an old custom of the abolished kingdom, whose defenders were provincial notables with no constituency in Tokyo, and whose abolition cost the Japanese state nothing and embarrassed nobody in it.

And in 1903, when Ryūkyūan women were exhibited at the Osaka exposition beside Ainu, Taiwanese, Koreans, Chinese, Indians and Hawaiians, the protests that carried weight came from Korean and Chinese students. Ōta Chōfu protested in his own paper — partly that the display shamed a neighbouring country, and partly that to be placed on a level with the Taiwanese highlanders and the Ainu was the greatest of insults.

The one great concealment belongs to the previous conqueror

The largest information-suppression apparatus in this entire study was not Japanese, was not aimed at a domestic public, and had been dismantled before the prefecture existed.

For two and a half centuries Satsuma maintained the fiction that Ryūkyū was an independent kingdom. Ryūkyūan officials dealing with China were instructed to deny the Japanese connection. Japanese goods, dress, hairstyles and weapons were put out of sight when Chinese investiture envoys were in the country, and Satsuma's

own supervising officer for those visits watched the proceedings from a distance rather than appearing at them. Directives of 1613 required annual instruction that Ryūkyū not revert to its pre-1609 appearance; by the eighteenth century the royal government was issuing standing regulations on travel, on the reception of the investiture ships, and on the handling of castaways, telling anyone who might meet a Chinese official exactly what to say.

That is a sustained, expensive, continuously administered concealment, and it ran for eight generations. Set beside it, the Japanese prefecture after 1879 conducted almost no concealment at all.

The difference is not in the gravity of what was being hidden. It is in the power of the audience. The Qing court could revoke an investiture and with it the trade licence that was the entire economic point of the arrangement, so the audience in Fuzhou had to be managed at continuous cost, in perpetuity, by every Ryūkyūan who might be spoken to. The Japanese electorate could do nothing whatever about Okinawa and showed no sign of wanting to, so nothing needed to be hidden from it.

1945

The Thirty-Second Army was formed in 1944 and made its headquarters in a tunnel complex beneath Shuri Castle. Its commander, Ushijima Mitsuru, included counter-espionage in the instruction he gave on taking up the command. Unit orders describe the district as a place of many rumours, designated in its entirety as a special area under the Military Secrets Protection Law, requiring extreme caution from a counter-intelligence standpoint. The army's own long-standing characterisations of the prefecture, accumulated since the Meiji period, ran along these lines: that military thought among the general population was inadequate, that national thought was weak, that the conception of the imperial house and the national polity was not thorough, that the people were exclusive and suspicious. Emigration had been heavy from these is-

lands, and men who had come back from Hawaii were regarded as a particular risk.

On 9 April 1945, eight days after the American landing, the Thirty-Second Army headquarters issued the following in its circulating bulletin:

> 球軍会報　四月九日 五、爾今軍人軍属ヲ問ハズ標準語以外ノ使用ヲ禁ズ　沖縄語ヲ以テ談話シアル者ハ間諜トミナシ処分ス

Tama Force bulletin, 9 April. Item five. Henceforth, whether soldier or civilian employee, the use of any language other than the standard language is prohibited. Those found conversing in the Okinawan language shall be regarded as spies and dealt with.

Dealt with meant executed.

Sixty-five years earlier the prefecture's first institution had been a room in the government building where clerks taught the sons of the old officialdom to speak Japanese. For four decades before this order, children in Okinawan schools had been made to wear a wooden placard round the neck for speaking their own language, and could only take it off by catching another child doing the same. The criterion did not change. Only the penalty did.

2007

And the last episode is the one that removes every remaining excuse.

In its 2006 screening of high-school history textbooks, the Ministry of Education required five publishers, across seven books, to remove wording indicating that the Japanese military had compelled the mass suicides of civilians during the battle. The requirement was reported on the front page of a Tokyo daily on 31 March 2007. The Ministry gave two grounds: that in a civil suit then running — the action brought by a former garrison commander of the Kerama Islands and bereaved families against Ōe Kenzaburō and Iwanami Shoten over the account in Okinawa Notes — the plaintiff had testified that no order to commit suicide had been

given; and that much of the scholarship addressed the psychological condition that led to the deaths rather than the existence of an order. It concluded that whether compulsion had occurred was not clear. Critics, of whom the historian Hayashi Hirofumi is the most cited, held the intervention to be part of a wider revisionist current and the original wording to be the more accurate.

What followed is the fullest response a conquered population in this corpus has ever been able to mount. The Okinawan papers ran it daily. A rally in Naha on 9 June drew about three and a half thousand people. The prefectural assembly and every single municipal assembly in the prefecture passed resolutions demanding the withdrawal of the screening opinion and the restoration of the wording. On 29 September 2007 a cross-party rally at Ginowan Seaside Park drew, on the organisers' count, some hundred and ten to hundred and sixteen thousand people — a larger gathering than the eighty-five thousand who had assembled in 1995 after the rape of a schoolgirl by American servicemen. The figure has itself been disputed since.

In December 2007 the Ministry, under a new cabinet, allowed the publishers to reinstate, by way of correction applications, wording referring to the involvement of the Japanese military. It did not withdraw the screening opinion. The wording referring to compulsion has not been restored.

Reading information against the framework

The corpus finding holds, and this case removes the last alibi for it. The censor existed, it was in constant use, and it was not needed here. But Okinawa adds something the European cases could not show, because in the European cases the metropolitan public had no representative of the conquered in the room at all.

Where the conquered elite has been co-opted, the metropole does not need a censor, because the colony's own press will do the work — in the colony's own voice, against the colony's own people.

The paper that put down the movement for an Okinawan franchise was founded, presided over and edited by men of the deposed royal house and the old shizoku, and it did so because it had concluded, not unreasonably, that assimilation was the only available route out of subordination to outside merchants. That instrument is cheaper than a censorship office and strictly better than one, because nothing it does can be denounced as foreign suppression. **A colonial order that has successfully co-opted an elite will show an empty censorship file not because nothing was suppressed but because the suppression was subcontracted.**

The intensity of an order's concealment measures the power of the audience it is hiding from, not the gravity of what is being hidden. Satsuma spent two and a half centuries and continuous administrative effort concealing a single fact from a court in Fuzhou, because that court could cancel the licence the whole arrangement existed to exploit. Japan concealed almost nothing from Tokyo, because Tokyo held no lever and wanted none. The same order, on the same islands, ran a maximal concealment and a negligible one in succession, and the variable was not shame. It was who could act.

An opposition press disappears without ever being suppressed. No law touched the Okinawa Jiron. It lost, its founder was destroyed by ordinary means — a lost election, a lost fortune, a breakdown at a railway station — and after that nobody kept the file. **A study that reads an absence of dissenting sources as an absence of dissent will record a defeat as a consensus**, and the correction is to ask, of every colonial archive, who was solvent enough to preserve it.

And the seam can be crossed completely and hold anyway. By 2007 there was no seam left in any sense this framework recognises. The population had the full franchise, two daily newspapers, sixty years of scholarship, a prefectural assembly, every municipal assembly, front-page coverage in the metropolitan press, and a tenth of its entire number standing in one park on one afternoon. Nothing was hidden and nobody was silent. The wording was not restored. **The far end of the seam is not a wall to be broken through;**

it is an absence of anyone who is obliged to answer — and where a conquered population is a small minority inside a democratic state, unanimity costs its opponents nothing, because there is no arithmetic in which it counts. That is the empty column's thesis proved on the one case where the passage of time and the extension of full citizenship have stripped away every other explanation.

One thing this module has established only negatively. It has shown that the metropole did not need to be managed. Who, then, actually decided things in these islands — which men, sitting where, answering to whom — and what happened when the conquered tried to enter that circle, is the next thing to establish.

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A note on sources. Quoted exactly, in the original with translation: item five of the Thirty-Second Army's bulletin of 9 April 1945, as printed in the Okinawa Prefectural History, documentary volume 23, Japanese military materials on the Battle of Okinawa. This study has seen the passage through Japanese secondary reproductions that cite that volume and agree in wording; one common rendering gives 爾後 where another gives 爾今, and the version printed here follows the reproduction that cites the prefectural history directly. It should be collated against the volume itself. The associated material — Ushijima's counter-espionage instruction on taking up command, the designation of the district under the Military Secrets Protection Law, the army's accumulated characterisations of the prefecture, and the suspicion attaching to returned emigrants — is taken from the same Japanese commentary and rests on the Okinawa Prefectural History and on Hayashi Hirofumi's work.

Paraphrased and credited: the Meiji censorship sequence — the ordinances of 1869, 1873, 1875, 1883 and 1887, the transfer of the machinery to the Home Ministry, and the Peace Preservation Law of 1925 — is from the standard Japanese reference literature and the English-language surveys, which agree; this study has not read the ordinances. The assertion that the apparatus was not turned on Okinawa rests on the absence of any such use in the sources consulted rather than on a search of Home Ministry files, and is offered as a strong negative finding open to correction.

The founding of the Ryūkyū Shimpō on 15 September 1893, Shō Jun's presidency, Ōta Chōfu's editorship, the involvement of Takamine Chōkyō

and Goeku Chōi, the circulation figures, the declared purpose of assimila - tion and its stated reasoning, the description of the paper as the organ of the ruling class, its suppression of Jahana's movement together with Gov - ernor Narahara, the attribution of its longevity to wealthy proprietors and an accommodating editorial line, and its position in the 1940 dialect con - troversy, follow the Japanese reference literature, which cites Ōta Masahide's entry in the Okinawa daihyakka jiten, and the Ryūkyū Kingdom Exchange History and Modern Okinawa digital archive's account of the modern Okinawan press. Readers should note that the present-day Ryūkyū Shimpō is a separate corporate entity that revived the title after the war and does not claim continuity with the paper described here.

The fate of the Okinawa Jiron — the survival of issue 27 in the Amano Tetsuo collection, the reconstruction of the rest from advertisements, and the chance identification of the first issue in a municipal library cata - logued as a monograph, subsequently reproduced at the University of the Ryukyus — is from Shimizu Yuichirō's published account of the find. Ja - hana's interview with Itagaki Taisuke in the summer of 1898, the private undertaking, and the fall of the first Ōkuma cabinet that November, are from the Japanese reference literature.

The Satsuma concealment policy repeats material established in this study's landscape and carries the same attributions, principally to Watanabe Miki's work.

On the textbook screening: the requirement placed on five publishers and seven high-school textbooks, the reporting of 31 March 2007, the Ministry's two stated grounds and its conclusion that compulsion was not clear, the Ōe–Iwanami litigation that preceded it, the rally of about three and a half thousand on 9 June, the resolutions of the prefectural and all municipal assemblies, the rally of 29 September at Ginowan with an or - ganisers' figure of about a hundred and ten to a hundred and sixteen thousand, the comparison with the eighty-five thousand of 1995, the par - tial restoration in December 2007 of wording referring to military involve - ment, and the fact that the screening opinion was never withdrawn and the wording on compulsion never restored — are drawn from the contemporary reporting in the Tokyo Shimbun and the Ryūkyū Shimpō, from the Japanese reference literature, and from Hayashi Hirofumi's article in Gendaishi Kenkyū. This is a live and contested matter in Japan - ese public life. The attendance figure is the organisers' and has been dis - puted; the Ministry's position and the critics' position are both reported above as each states it, and this study does not adjudicate between them. Anyone building further on this section should read Hayashi directly and

should also read the Ministry's own published account of the screening, which this study has not.

MODULE 8

A HEREDITARY GOVERNOR

Module 8 — elite coordination and the default, 1879–1942: who actually decided, the three factions and their three newspapers, the marriages that bound the deposed dynasty into the conquering state, the one man who was destroyed, and the proposition none of them ever put in issue

A case study in the Patterns of Power series · Thomas J. Bryan with Claude (Anthropic) · held as tested, not revealed

Who held the offices

Every governor of Okinawa Prefecture between 1879 and 1945 came from outside it. So did the senior officers of the prefectural administration, the police and the schools. The commerce of the islands — the rice and the sugar and the shipping — was held by merchants from Osaka and Kagoshima who had come after 1882 and who sat, in due course, in the prefectural assembly.

The dominant figure is Narahara Shigeru, a Satsuma man who had gone to Ryūkyū in January 1872 to negotiate away the kingdom's old debts to the Shimazu, and who came back twenty years later as governor. He held the post from 1892 to 1908, sixteen years, having secured from Itō Hirobumi and Matsukata Masayoshi, before he would take it, a promise that he would not be moved partway through. He was also, from 1899, the director of the Finance Ministry's Provisional Okinawa Land Rearrangement Bureau, which meant that the man converting the islands' land into private property and state forest was the same man administering the islands. He was called the Ryūkyū king.

That is the outer circle, and it is the ordinary shape of a colonial administration. What is not ordinary, and what this module is about, is the inner one.

The five scholars

In 1882 the prefecture sent its first five students to Tokyo at public expense. They were Kishimoto Gashō, Ōta Chōfu, Takamine Chōkyō, Nakijin Chōban and Jahana Noboru. Only Jahana was not of shizoku birth.

What became of them is the module in miniature. Ōta Chōfu founded and edited Okinawa's first newspaper and became mayor of Shuri. Takamine Chōkyō helped found the same paper and be - came the first speaker of the prefectural assembly. Jahana read under Nakae Chōmin at the Gakushūin, went on to forestry and then to the agricultural college of the Imperial University, took his degree in 1891 as the first agriculture graduate Okinawa produced, entered the prefectural government as an engineer, and was destroyed by it.

Four of the five spent their careers defending the arrangement. The fifth was the son of a farmer.

Three factions, three newspapers

By 1908 there were three daily papers in Okinawa, and each of them was the organ of a different group.

The Ryūkyū Shimpō, from 15 September 1893, belonged to the royal house and the old shizoku. Its founding representative was Shō Jun, Prince Matsuyama, the fourth son of the last king, who had been taken to Tokyo at seven with his father and had come home in 1892 at twenty with his brother Shō In. Ōta Chōfu was the full-time editor. Takamine Chōkyō, Goeku Chōi and Tomigusuku Seiwa were among its founders. Goeku had married Shō Tai's eldest daughter in 1887.

And its first chief editor was Noma Gozō, whom Governor Narahara had sent into the paper as a metsuke — an overseer. When Noma left, Goeku Chōi took the chair himself.

The Okinawa Shinbun followed on 3 November 1905, founded by the sojourning merchants, to answer the Ryūkyū Shimpō. The Okinawa Mainichi Shinbun followed on 10 December 1908, founded by leading men of Naha and of the county districts, with Tōma Jūshin as president and Moromizato Chōkō as chief editor; it was called the organ of the commoner faction, and it existed to speak for Naha and county interests with an eye to the special prefectural system due to come into force the following year.

Three groups whose material interests genuinely conflicted — the deposed aristocracy, the mainland merchants who had taken the trade, and the commoner notables of the port and the countryside — each with a printing press, each arguing publicly against the others, for thirty years, until the government's one-prefecture-one-paper policy folded all three into a single title on 20 December 1940.

What they were arguing about

They were arguing about the terms of a special system, and the special system is worth setting out because its timetable is the measure of what the arrangement conceded and when.

In 1896 the prefecture was reorganised into two urban wards, Shuri and Naha, and five counties — but the kingdom's magiri survived beneath them, because the policy of preserving old customs was still running. Regulations for magiri officials and magiri assemblies came in 1898. In April 1908 the Okinawa and Islands Town and Village System converted the magiri into towns and villages and the old villages into hamlets; it applied to Okinawa and the Izu islands, and the reference literature describes it plainly as conferring narrower self-government than the ordinary town and village system and as more strongly bureaucratic in character.

The prefectural assembly came on 1 April 1909, by Imperial Ordinance No. 20 of 12 March that year, concerning special provisions

of the prefectural system for Okinawa. The first election was held on 11 May 1909 and returned thirty members from the two wards and five counties; the first extraordinary session opened on 28 June; the first speaker was Takamine Chōkyō. The Okinawa Prefectural Assembly's own official history states the comparison without softening it: the Tokyo prefectural assembly had first met in March 1879, so an assembly in which the people of Okinawa took part was created thirty years late. Nine prefectural elections were held, the last in 1942.

The parliamentary franchise arrived in 1912 for the main island, and not until 1919 or 1920 for Miyako and Yaeyama. The integration of local government with the rest of Japan was completed in 1921.

The most they asked for

Between 1896 and 1897 the old ruling class made its one organised bid, and what it asked for is the sharpest single fact in this module.

The movement was called the Kōdōkai. Its leaders were Shō In, the second son of the last king, created a baron on 30 June 1896, and Shō Jun, the fourth son, together with Goeku Chōi, who by then was running the Ryūkyū Shimpō. It petitioned the Japanese government for a special system for Okinawa under which the Shō house would be the **hereditary governor of the prefecture**.

Mainland newspapers, the Yorozu Chōhō among them, reported it, and treated it as a movement for the restoration of the domain by the Shō family. The government rejected the petition. The movement subsided, and organised movements of that character ceased.

Read the demand exactly, because everything turns on its shape. It is not independence. It is not the restoration of the kingdom. It is not even the return of the islands to the tributary position they had held for four and a half centuries. It is a request that the Japanese emperor appoint the deposed king's family, in perpetuity, to the governorship of a Japanese prefecture — a Japanese office, in a Japanese administrative structure, held at the emperor's pleasure and exercised under the Home Ministry.

The war with China had ended the year before. The Ganko-tō, the party that had petitioned Peking for twenty years, collapsed with the Qing defeat, and the assimilationists took the field. Within eighteen months of that collapse the highest thing the conquered elite could think of asking for conceded, in its own terms, every proposition the conquest had asserted.

And Jahana Noboru attacked it. He had held himself apart from the restorationists throughout, and he was severely critical of the Kōdōkai. So the two possible oppositions in Okinawa — the royalist and the democratic — spent the 1890s attacking each other, while the newspaper the royalists owned helped the governor break the democrat.

The marriages

The binding was not only political, and the family register makes it plain.

Shō Tai's daughters married Goeku Chōi, who became a member of the House of Representatives in 1914; Kanna Kenwa, rear-admiral and member of the House of Representatives; and Kamiyama Masayoshi, a councillor of the Monopoly Bureau. His eldest son Shō Ten succeeded to the marquisate in 1901 and sat in the House of Peers. His grandson Shō Shō married a daughter of Count Ogasawara Tadanobu. Shō Jun took a barony, sat in the House of Peers from 1904 to 1915, founded the Bank of Okinawa in 1899 and a shipping company besides, and ran an estate at Momohara where he introduced pineapple.

Kanna Kenwa is the whole arrangement in one man. In 1895 he was a middle-school pupil, expelled as a ringleader of the six-month strike against a mainland principal who had told the school it was in a pitiable position. Governor Narahara helped him into the Naval Academy. He rose to rear-admiral in the navy of the state that had abolished his country, entered the House of Representatives, and married a daughter of the last king of Ryūkyū.

Nobody in that sentence was required to like anybody. Narahara took the villages' forest and destroyed Jahana. The Shō house had spent the 1880s petitioning the Qing court to undo what Narahara's government had done. The newspaper the Shō house founded began with Narahara's own overseer in the editor's chair. And by 1914 the men on both sides of all of that were sitting in the same two chambers in Tokyo, connected by marriage, holding positions each of which depended on the continuation of the settlement.

The one who was not in it

Jahana Noboru was appointed a land survey commissioner in December 1893, put in charge of reclamation, and removed from that post in September 1894 after opposing the disposal of the villages' common forest. He resigned from the prefecture in 1898, went to Tokyo, obtained an interview with the Home Minister Itagaki Taisuke — the leader of the Freedom and People's Rights Movement — and got a private undertaking that Narahara would be replaced. The Ōkuma cabinet fell that November and the undertaking fell with it.

In 1899 he founded the Okinawa Club with Tōyama Kyūzō, on three planks: criticism of the prefectural administration, the land settlement, and the franchise. He was defeated in the election for the officers of the Agricultural and Industrial Bank. He lost his property in the effort. He left for the mainland to look for work, collapsed at Kobe station in 1901, and never recovered. He died in 1908, four years before Okinawa was given a parliamentary vote and a year before the first prefectural assembly he had campaigned for held its first session under the speakership of a man he had gone to Tokyo with in 1882.

One more career belongs beside his. Tomigusuku Seiwa was the fourth son of Tomikawa Seiki, the last sanshikan of the royal government, who had been appointed adviser to the Japanese prefecture in September 1879, had fled to China in 1882 and had died there in 1890. The son went to Keiō at seventeen, came home, and

became a reporter on the Ryūkyū Shimpō. At forty-one he left a wife and five children and went to America, where he washed dishes and sent money home every month.

What none of them put in issue

Set out the whole of the elite conflict in these islands between 1879 and 1942 and then ask what survived it.

There was a royalist party that petitioned a foreign empire for twenty years and sent men across the water at the risk of five hun - dred days' imprisonment. There was a movement to make the de - posed dynasty hereditary governors. There were three newspapers representing the aristocracy, the mainland merchants and the commoner notables, arguing continuously about the terms of the special system. There was a democratic movement that fought the governor over the forest, the land settlement and the franchise, and lost. There was a peasant campaign from Miyako that beat the pre - fecture in the Imperial Diet. There were nine prefectural elections. There was a governor who stayed sixteen years and a Home Minister who tried and failed to remove him.

After 1897, none of it put in issue that these islands were part of Japan. Every faction's programme, including the maximal one, took the annexation as the ground on which the argument stood. That is what the framework means by the default, and it is rarely measur - able this cleanly: it can be identified here not by inference but be - cause people with every reason to attack the proposition, and the money and the printing presses to do it with, spent forty years attacking each other instead.

Reading elite coordination against the framework

This is the control case for the northern island's absence of a native elite, and it settles what that absence costs and buys. Where a conquered people has no elite, nobody has standing to raise its

grievances and the order gets a silence it did not pay for. Okinawa shows the other side. Here there was an elite, it was co-opted, and the conquered got things the Ainu never got — a franchise, an assembly, municipal offices, an abolished head tax, seats in both chambers of the Diet — because there were people with standing to ask. And the same elite, in the same decade, helped a Satsuma governor destroy the one man asking for anything it did not want. **A co-optable elite is simultaneously the conquered's only channel and the order's cheapest defence, and it is not possible to have the first without the second, because they are the same people.**

The ceiling of a co-opted elite's demands is set by what it would still hold if the demand were granted, and that ceiling always concedes the conquest. The Kōdōkai wanted a hereditary governorship. That is the largest thing the Shō house could ask for while remaining at the top of anything: a permanent office in a structure whose existence guarantees them precedence, an income, a barony, and seats in the House of Peers. Independence would have returned them to the throne of a small kingdom that Japan would have had to be persuaded to permit, and would have restored the shizoku to a position that no longer had a revenue attached. **A co-opted elite's maximal public demand is a diagnostic instrument: it names the largest thing they can ask for without forfeiting what they have already been given, and it will therefore always be a demand for better terms inside the arrangement rather than a demand against it.** Where a study can find that demand stated in writing, it has located the boundary of the default without having to infer it.

Press plurality is not evidence that fundamentals were open. By 1908 Okinawa had three newspapers, published by three groups whose material interests were genuinely opposed and who attacked each other in print for three decades. A researcher counting titles would conclude that the colony had a contested public sphere, and would be right about the contest and wrong about what was in it. All three were arguing about the distribution of a special system all three took as given. **The corpus should treat the number of fac-**

tions as a measure of how much there was to divide, and the content of what they never argued about as the measure of the default.

And the conqueror's most economical instrument is promotion of individuals across faction lines. Narahara removed Jahana from his post in 1894 and put Kanna Kenwa through the Naval Academy in the same decade; he installed his own overseer as chief editor of the royalists' newspaper and then let the royalists have it back. Those are not contradictory acts. They are one method. **Where a conqueror can distribute offices, commissions, scholarships and marriages to persons rather than to groups, he converts each faction into a collection of individuals with separate prospects, and no faction can then sustain a demand that would cost its own members their advancement.** The Kōdōkai's leaders were baronets by 1896 and members of the Diet by 1914; the man who had led a strike against a Japanese principal at seventeen was a Japanese admiral at fifty and married to the king's daughter. Nobody had to be persuaded of anything. Each of them, defending the position he personally held, was defending the whole structure, and the structure required no coordination at all to be defended — only that each man look to his own place in it.

One question this module has established the shape of without answering. If the default was never contested by anyone with standing, what happened to the people with no standing — the ones outside the arrangement altogether — and was there ever a moment when the islands could have gone a different way? That is the next thing to establish.

❧

A note on sources. This module quotes nothing exactly. Its facts are drawn from the Japanese reference literature, from the Okinawa Prefectural Archives, from the prefectural assembly's own published history, and from the Ryūkyū Kingdom Exchange History and Modern Okinawa digital archive's account of the modern Okinawan press, and each of those is credited in the text where it bears.

The local-government sequence — the ward and county reorganisation of 1896 under the Okinawa Prefecture Ward System and the ordinance on the constitution of counties, the survival of the magiri beneath it, the magiri regulations of 1898, the Okinawa and Islands Town and Village System of 1 April 1908 with its narrower self-government and stronger bureaucratic character, Imperial Ordinance No. 20 of 12 March 1909 on special provisions of the prefectural system, the first prefectural election of 11 May 1909 returning thirty members, the first session of 28 June, Takamine Chōkyō's speakership, the nine elections to 1942, the parliamentary franchise in 1912 and its extension to the Sakishima islands in 1919 or 1920, and the completion of local-government integration in 1921 — is from the Okinawa Prefectural Archives, the prefectural assembly's official history, the Ryūkyū Shimpō's Okinawa Compact Encyclopedia and the Japanese reference literature, which agree. The comparison with the Tokyo prefectural assembly of March 1879, and the characterisation of the gap as thirty years, is the Okinawa Prefectural Assembly's own.

The founding of the Ryūkyū Shimpō in 1893 and the identities of its founders; the sending of Noma Gozō into the paper by Governor Narahara as an overseer and his succession by Goeku Chōi; Goeku's marriage in 1887 to Shō Tai's eldest daughter, his development of the Kōdōkai movement, his withdrawal after its failure into the management of the Shō house's commercial concerns, and his election to the House of Representatives in 1914; and Tomigusuku Seiwa's parentage, his career on the paper and his emigration — are from the Ryūbun 21 biographical compilation of modern Okinawan figures, a specialist Okinawan-literature resource whose entries are detailed and internally consistent but which this study has not been able to check against an independent source. The founding of the Okinawa Shinbun on 3 November 1905 by the sojourning merchants and of the Okinawa Mainichi Shinbun on 10 December 1908 by Naha and county notables, with Tōma Jūshin and Moromizato Chōkō, and its description as the organ of the commoner faction, are from the Ryūkyū Kingdom digital archive. The amalgamation of the three papers on 20 December 1940 under the one-prefecture-one-paper policy is from the Japanese reference literature.

The Kōdōkai movement — its dates, the participation of Shō In and Shō Jun, the petition that the Shō house be made hereditary governor of the prefecture, the mainland press coverage including the Yorozu Chōhō and its treatment of the movement as one for the restoration of the domain, and the government's rejection — is from the chronology published by the Ryūkyū Kingdom digital archive and from the Japanese reference literature. Jahana Noboru's hostility to the movement, and his distance from the

restorationists generally, is recorded in the reference literature citing the Okinawa Compact Encyclopedia. This study has not read the petition itself, and anyone building further on this module's central argument should find it: its exact wording is the best available evidence for where the boundary of the default lay, and the argument above rests on a summary of its demand rather than on its text.

The Shō family's marriages and titles are from the published genealogical compilations of the Japanese peerage, which are secondary and occasionally err in detail; the principal facts — Shō Tai's marquisate in 1885 and seat in the House of Peers from 1890, Shō Ten's succession in 1901, Shō Jun's barony and his membership of the House of Peers from 1904 to 1915 and his founding of the Bank of Okinawa in 1899, Shō In's barony of 30 June 1896, and the marriages to Goeku Chōi, Kanna Kenwa and Kamiyama Masayoshi — are corroborated in the Japanese reference literature. Kanna Kenwa's expulsion in 1895, Narahara's assistance to him and his subsequent career repeat material established in an earlier module.

Jahana's career and its end repeat material established in earlier modules and carry the same attributions.

MODULE 9

AN UNFAIR RESULT

Module 9 — plurality or foreclosure, 1889–1945: the clause that named three places, the circle that kept them out, the twelve years between a right and its commencement, the rings of exclusion inside the prefecture itself, and the phrase the excluded used to get in

A case study in the Patterns of Power series · Thomas J. Bryan with Claude (Anthropic) · held as tested, not revealed

The clause

The House of Representatives Election Law of 1889 gave the vote to men paying fifteen yen or more in direct national tax. Its hundred and eleventh article reads:

> 北海道沖縄県及小笠原島ニ於テハ将来一般ノ地方制度ヲ準行スルノ時ニ至ルマテ此ノ法律ヲ施行セス

In Hokkaidō, Okinawa Prefecture and the Ogasawara Islands, this Law shall not be enforced until such time in the future as the general system of local government comes to be applied.

Three places, named in the founding electoral statute of constitutional Japan, and the ground of their exclusion is not that their people were not Japanese. It is that their local institutions were not the ordinary ones.

This is a position the framework has not previously had to describe, and it needs stating precisely. Taiwan after 1895 and Korea after 1910 were outside the constitutional order proper, governed by Governors-General with power to legislate for them. Okinawa was a prefecture. Its people were subjects of the emperor under the Constitution of 1889, with whatever rights that document conferred, liable to its taxes, subject from 1898 to its conscription law,

and represented in neither chamber of its Diet. They were inside the state and outside the general law, and the instrument that held them there was not a police force. It was a proviso.

The circle

Why the vote was withheld was asked directly in the Diet, and answered on the record, and the answer is the most important document in this module.

In February 1899, before the special committee of the House of Representatives considering a bill to amend the election law, the Home Ministry official Ichiki Kitokurō replied to a question from Takagi Masatoshi — a member who had himself entered the chamber from a category that had had to argue its way in, being the first blind man to sit in a Japanese legislature. Ichiki had surveyed Okinawa in 1894 and written a report on it, and he knew the prefecture's administration as well as anyone in Tokyo. He said:

> 沖縄県ニ於テ此法ヲ行ヒマシタ所ガ、選挙権ヲ持ッテ居ルモノガ殆ド無カラウト思ヒマス、今日ノ所デハ、営業税ハ立派ニ施行シテ居リマスカラ、営業税ヲ納メルモノハアリマスガ、是ハ市街地ガアリマシテ、納メテ居ルモノハ極ク僅少ナモノデ、多クハ鹿児島カラ行ッテ居ル商人等デアルト云フコトデゴザイマス、〔中略〕地租ニツイテハ、那覇首里ト云フ重モナ土地ハ地租ヲ納メテ居リマセヌ、其他ハ一少部分ハ、所有権デモ今日認メテ居ラヌ姿ニナッテ居リマス、私有地トモ定マラズ、共有地ヤラ土地ノ性質ガ分ラズ、税ハ村デ団体デ負担シテ居ルト云コトデ、誰ガ幾ラ納メテ居ルト云フコトガ知レマセヌ、宮古島ハ人頭税デゴザイマシテ、殆ド平均ニ男女共ニ負担シテ居ル、其中、士族ハ免除セラレテ居ルト云フヤウナ訳デ、現在ノ所ハ選挙法ヲ施行シマスルト、出来タ所ガ不公平ナ結果ニナルト思ヒマス

If we were to put this law into force in Okinawa Prefecture, I think there would be almost nobody holding the franchise. As things stand today the business tax is properly in operation, so there are persons paying business tax; but that is where there are urban districts, and those paying are extremely few, and most of them, it is said, are merchants who have gone there from Kagoshima. … As to

the land tax, the principal places, Naha and Shuri, pay no land tax. As to the rest, in a small part, even ownership is in a condition not recognised at this day. It is not settled as private land; it is common land, or the nature of the land is not known, and the tax is borne collectively by the village, so it is not known who pays how much. Miyako Island has the head tax, borne almost equally by men and women alike, and among them the shizoku are exempt. As matters stand, if we put the election law into force, the result that came out would be an unfair one.

Every sentence of that is true, and every condition it describes was created and maintained by the government Ichiki served.

There was no individual land tax in Okinawa because the prefecture had preserved the kingdom's fiscal system since 1879, as a deliberate policy adopted in the disposition officer's own drafting outline for the express reason that abolishing the old order had led, on the mainland, from the abolition of the domains to the samurai rebellions. Land was not settled as private property because the jiwari rotation had been left running. Miyako had a per-capita levy because that levy was one of the old customs. The shizoku were exempt from it because the settlement of 1879 had confirmed their privileges. Nobody knew who paid how much because the machine the state had inherited had been designed to satisfy a lord in Kagoshima rather than to itemise a population.

You cannot have the vote because your institutions differ from the general ones; your institutions differ because we preserved them; therefore you cannot have the vote.

And the last turn of the circle is the one that makes this case hard rather than merely damning. Ichiki's "unfair" was not a fig leaf. He had just said who the qualified electors would have been: mostly merchants from Kagoshima. Extending the franchise to Okinawa in 1899 would have handed the prefecture's representation to the sojourning traders who had taken its commerce, and enfranchised almost no Okinawans at all. The exclusion was, at that moment, also a protection. The preservation policy that disqualified the population was the same policy that would have made a franchise

meaningless, and the official explaining it was not lying about either half.

The land settlement that removed the stated obstacle began in April 1899, some weeks after Ichiki spoke, and finished in 1903.

The twelve years

The franchise was granted to Okinawa by the amendment of the election law promulgated on 28 March 1900. The new law's own hundred and eleventh article then provided:

> 本法ハ次ノ総選挙ヨリ之ヲ施行ス。但シ北海道（札幌区、函館区、小樽区ヲ除ク）、沖縄県ニ付テハ勅令ヲ以テ別ニ施行ノ期日ヲ定ム

This Law shall be enforced from the next general election. Provided that as regards Hokkaidō — excluding the wards of Sapporo, Hakodate and Otaru — and Okinawa Prefecture, the date of enforcement shall be fixed separately by imperial ordinance.

The imperial ordinance came on 29 March 1912. Okinawa voted for the first time at the eleventh general election that year.

Twelve years, of which the last nine fell after the land settlement had removed every disqualification Ichiki had listed. The right existed on paper from 1900; what the executive retained was the switch. That is the characteristic instrument of a special track, and it deserves to be named as such: **not a denial of a right, but the reservation of its commencement to the discretion of the government.** There is nothing to appeal against, because nothing has been refused.

The rings inside the prefecture

There was never one boundary. There were at least four, and they came down in order of what each group was worth to the arrangement.

The 1900 law defined Okinawa's constituency as Naha ward, Shuri ward, and the counties of Shimajiri, Nakagami and Kunigami, re-

turning two members. Miyako and Yaeyama do not appear in it. At the moment the prefecture was let in, the southern islands were left out by the drafting of the constituency — the same islands whose per-capita levy Ichiki had cited as a reason for excluding the whole prefecture, and which had been paying it since 1637. The levy was abolished in 1903. They still had no vote.

Below them were the Daitō islanders, who at the general election of 20 February 1928 — the first held under universal manhood suf ‑ frage — were given the vote for the House of Representatives and not for the prefectural assembly, and who had no municipal gov ‑ ernment of any kind until 1946 and no title to the land they farmed until an American High Commissioner ruled on it in 1964.

And outside all of it were women, everywhere in Japan. The election law of 1889 gave the vote and the right to stand to men only, and the Public Order and Police Law of 1900 forbade women to join political associations or to hold or attend political meetings. In Okinawa that exclusion fell on a society in which a hierarchy of priestesses appointed from Shuri had been a national institution since the 1470s; the noro's service land was converted by the Land Rearrangement Act of 1899 into somebody's private farm, and nothing else was given in its place.

So the innermost ring of the prefecture was not "Okinawan". It was male, resident on the main island, and paying fifteen yen in direct national tax. Its members were admitted twenty-three years after the metropole. The Sakishima islanders followed seven years after that. The Daitō tenants never received a prefectural vote at all. Women received nothing anywhere until 1945.

The phrase the excluded used

In 1906, Ōmura Kanjō and others of Hirara on Miyako petitioned that the withholding of the franchise from Miyako and Yaeyama was:

> 不公平ニシテ一視同仁ノ趣旨ニ背ク

unfair, and contrary to the intent of impartial benevolence.

The House of Peers adopted the petition. The election law was amended on 22 May 1919, and from the fourteenth general election in 1920 the whole of Okinawa Prefecture had the vote.

Isshi dōjin is not a legal term. It is a formula of imperial legitimation — that the sovereign regards all his people with one eye and one benevolence — of exactly the kind catalogued in this study's third module as part of the robe: produced by the order, for the order's own justification, addressed to nobody who could enforce it. In 1906 farmers on an island that had been paying a per-capita levy since 1637, and had lost it only three years earlier, picked that formula up and made it the operative ground of a petition, and a chamber of the Imperial Diet adopted it.

That is the mechanism worth the whole module. Nobody conceded a principle. What happened is that the state had said something about itself often enough that refusing the petition would have required it to say the opposite in public, in its own upper house, to petitioners quoting it back. **A legitimating formula becomes something functionally like a right when there exists an institution obliged to receive people who invoke it** — not because the formula acquires legal force, but because the accumulated cost of a state publicly contradicting its own account of itself eventually exceeds the cost of complying.

And the boundary condition is in the same sentence. The Ryūkyūan officials who petitioned the Qing court between 1879 and 1885 also had a claim and also had words to press it in, and thirty-one petitions produced nothing, because the Qing court was under no obligation to receive them and no cost attached to declining. The residue requires a forum. The forum is what plurality actually supplies, and it is the only thing it reliably supplies.

What arrived with the vote

The franchise did not bring liberty to Okinawa. It brought factions, and the factions brought a newspaper.

After the first election of 1912, the mainland parties extended their organisation into the prefecture, and a contest between the Seiyūkai and the Kenseikai broke out in Okinawan politics. It broke out inside the Ryūkyū Shimpō as well. When the Kenseikai faction allied with the governor became dominant in the paper, five young reporters walked out on a cry of smashing the cliques and founded the Okinawa Asahi Shimbun on 10 November 1915. It ran until the amalgamation of 1940 and was the second-longest-lived newspaper in modern Okinawa. Miyako and Yaeyama produced papers of their own in the same period.

The plurality lasted twenty-eight years. On 20 December 1940 the government's one-prefecture-one-paper policy folded the Ryūkyū Shimpō, the Okinawa Mainichi Shimbun and the Okinawa Nippō into a single title. What had been taken twenty-three years to obtain, and had generated three papers and nine prefectural elections, was closed by an administrative direction issued to the whole country at once.

Was there a moment when it could have gone otherwise

Three, and each of them closed for a reason the framework should record.

In 1880 the Japanese and Qing negotiators agreed a partition: Japan would take the northern islands including Okinawa, and Miyako and Yaeyama would go to China. Ryūkyūan activists in China lobbied against it — Rin Seikō killed himself in Peking in November of that year — and some Chinese officials opposed it, and the Qing government did not ratify. The moment closed because the people it concerned refused a settlement that would have divided them.

In 1896 the Kōdōkai asked for the Shō house to be made hereditary governors. The government refused. The moment closed because the demand had already conceded the annexation and there was nothing in it the government needed to buy.

Between 1899 and 1901 Jahana Noboru's Okinawa Club campaigned for the land settlement and the franchise. It closed because its leader was removed from office, lost a bank election, lost his property and broke down at a railway station, and because the newspaper owned by the deposed royal house helped the governor put him down.

None of those closures required force. Each of them was accomplished by ordinary institutional means, inside a constitutional state, against people who had every formal liberty except the ones that would have mattered.

Reading plurality against the framework

Inside a state with real institutions, exclusion is administered by exception rather than by denial. Okinawa was never outside the Constitution and was never under martial rule. It was governed by a special ward system from 1896, a special town-and-village system from 1908 whose self-government was explicitly narrower than the ordinary one, a special prefectural system from 1909, and an election law whose application to the prefecture was reserved to imperial ordinance from 1900 to 1912. **Where a metropole has courts, a diet, a press and a constitution, foreclosure in the periphery will take the form of a separate legal track, and the record will accordingly show no repression, a considerate government, and a population that cannot vote.** A study looking for the suppression of liberty in such a case will find nothing, because nothing was suppressed; what was done was that the general law was not applied.

The justification for the exception will be true, and the state will have made it true. This is the refinement that costs the most to state honestly. Ichiki Kitokurō was not dissembling: there was no individual land tax, ownership was unsettled, the village bore the burden collectively, Miyako paid per head, the shizoku were exempt, and the few men who would have qualified were mostly merchants from Kagoshima. Every one of those facts was a con-

sequence of the preservation policy adopted in 1879 for the state's own convenience and defended in the 1880s against a reforming governor. **Where a conqueror preserves the conquered order, he manufactures a real disqualification, and can thereafter decline to extend citizenship on grounds that would survive cross-examination.** The circle closes without anyone lying, which is why it holds so well and why the officials inside it could believe themselves reasonable.

The residue mechanism is real, and this case shows both how it works and what it requires. The formulae an order generates to justify itself — impartial benevolence, one kind and nature, no difference in speech or writing — are produced for the order's own purposes and cost it nothing at the time. They are also, later, the cheapest lever available to anyone the order excludes, because invoking them requires no standing, no property and no permission, and refusing them requires the order to contradict in public the thing it has been saying about itself. **A legitimating claim becomes a functional right at the point where a body exists that is obliged to hear people repeating it back.** Petitions in that form got Miyako and Yaeyama the vote in 1919. Thirty-one petitions in the same period to a court in Peking that was obliged to hear nothing got nothing at all.

And the useful question is never whether the conquered had liberties. They did: constitutional subjecthood, courts, a right of petition, three newspapers, a prefectural assembly, two seats in the Diet. The useful question is which of them, in what order, and how long each ring waited — because the order is the arrangement's own ranking of what each group was worth. Main-island male ratepayers came in twenty-three years after the metropole. Sakishima came seven years after them, and had to quote the emperor's own formula to do it. The Daitō tenants, who lived on ground owned outright by a sugar company that issued its own currency, never got a prefectural vote at all. Women got nothing until the occupation. **A ring's date of admission is the best available measure**

of its bargaining position, and the sequence is legible even where every stated reason is administrative.

One thing this module cannot settle from inside. Every liberty described above was granted by the metropole, on the metropole's schedule, for the metropole's reasons — and every one of them was gone by 1945, along with a quarter of the prefecture's civilian population. What broke the arrangement, and whether anything in it broke from within, is the next thing to establish.

❧

A note on sources. Quoted exactly, in the original with translation: Article 111 of the House of Representatives Election Law of 1889; Ichiki Kitokurō's reply before the special committee on the bill to amend that law, from the stenographic record of the thirteenth Imperial Diet, February 1899; the proviso to Article 111 of the amended law promulgated on 28 March 1900; and the operative phrase of the 1906 petition from Hirara. All four are reproduced in the Japan Center for Asian Historical Records' 2023 online exhibition on the road to universal suffrage, in the column by Kusano Yasuhiro on Okinawa's acquisition of the franchise, which cites the signed originals held in the National Archives of Japan — the 1900 amendment at reference A03020439700 and the imperial ordinance of 1912, No. 58 of Meiji 45, at A03020930400 — and the Diet stenographic record for the Ichiki passage. This study has read the column and not the originals; the wording above follows the column's transcription.

Ichiki's survey of Okinawa in 1894 and his resulting report, and Takagi Masatoshi's position as the first blind member of a Japanese legislature, are as recorded in the same column. The dating of the land settlement to April 1899–1903 repeats material established in an earlier module.

The extension of the franchise to Miyako and Yaeyama by the amendment of 22 May 1919, Law No. 60 of Taishō 8, and the exclusion of the Sakishima islands from the constituency as defined in 1900, are from the same source; the first exercise of that franchise at the fourteenth general election in 1920 is from the Japanese reference literature, which in some places gives 1919 for the statute and 1920 for the election and should not be read as a discrepancy. The account of Okinawan disenfranchisement and of Ishigaki's further exclusion given by Ushirota Atsushi of Kanagawa University, himself from Ishigaki, is consistent with the archival record and is credited here for the emphasis it places on the internal boundary.

The Public Order and Police Law of 1900 and the exclusion of women from the franchise and from political association are from the National Archives of Japan's published materials on the achievement of women's suffrage. The Daitō islanders' receipt of the parliamentary but not the prefectural franchise in 1928 repeats material established in an earlier module and rests on the chronology published by Kita-Daitō village.

The party contest following the 1912 election, the split within the Ryūkyū Shimpō, the walkout of five reporters and the founding of the Okinawa Asahi Shimbun on 10 November 1915, its survival to the 1940 amalgamation as the second-longest-lived paper in modern Okinawa, and the newspapers of Miyako and Yaeyama, are from the Ryūkyū Kingdom Exchange History and Modern Okinawa digital archive's account of the modern Okinawan press.

The partition negotiation of 1880 and its failure to be ratified, Rin Seikō's suicide in Peking in November 1880, the Kōdōkai's petition and its rejection, and Jahana Noboru's campaign and its collapse, repeat material established in earlier modules and carry the same attributions and the same cautions — in particular that this study has not read the Kōdōkai petition itself.

MODULE 10

THE DAY OF HUMILIATION

Module 10 — change and collapse, 1945–2019: the battle fought to buy time for somewhere else, the reforms that stopped at a line on a map, the twenty-seven years under a third administration, the price the metropole paid to get the islands back, and why the question did not close

A case study in the Patterns of Power series · Thomas J. Bryan with Claude (Anthropic) · held as tested, not revealed

What the order did with the population it had spent sixty years forming

The Battle of Okinawa began on 26 March 1945 in the Kerama islands. Organised fighting on Okinawa Island ran from 1 April to 23 June. The Thirty-Second Army had been ordered onto a strategy of protracted defence, and the object of that strategy was not to hold the islands. It was to delay the invasion of the Japanese home islands for as long as possible.

The figures compiled by the Okinawa prefectural government's relief section and published in March 1976 are these. Japanese dead and missing: 188,136. Of those, 65,908 were soldiers from outside Okinawa. 122,228 were Okinawans — 94,000 of them civilians and 28,228 locally conscripted servicemen. The pre-war population of the prefecture was about 490,000. Roughly one Okinawan in four was killed. American dead and missing are given as 12,281 in the United States official history, which is the figure the Japanese For - eign Ministry cites, and as 20,195 in the Japanese reference literat - ure; the ground-battle total for both sides and the civilians together

is conventionally given as about two hundred thousand and is not exactly known.

The killing did not stop when the organised fighting did. It continued after 23 June, and after the surrender document was signed on 7 September, through starvation and through malaria in the areas people had been moved to.

The term used in Okinawa for what was done is sute-ishi — the stone a go player deliberately gives up in order to gain position elsewhere on the board. It is not a polemical coinage from the margins. The Okinawa Prefectural Peace Memorial Museum has mounted an exhibition under the title Okinawa Made a Sacrifice Stone.

Two facts from earlier in this study belong here and nowhere else. In April 1945 the army whose defence this was ordered that anyone found speaking the Okinawan language be treated as a spy and dealt with — the same criterion the prefecture's schools had been enforcing with a wooden placard for four decades, with the penalty changed. And of the roughly one hundred and twenty-two thousand Okinawan dead, at least a thousand, on the conservative count, died in the mass suicides whose character the Japanese state was still adjusting in school textbooks in 2007.

The framework holds that a colonial order collapses when the metropole's will empties rather than when the ruled beat the floor. In this case the will did not empty. **The order spent the population it had spent sixty years forming, in a battle fought to buy time for the ground the population had been taught to call the mainland.**

The reforms stopped at a line drawn in January 1946

On 29 January 1946 the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers directed the separation of the Nansei Islands south of the thirtieth parallel from Japan.

The consequence is the most important administrative fact of the postwar period in these islands, and it is easily missed because it

consists entirely of things that did not happen. The occupation's programme of democratisation — the new constitution, the land reform that broke the absentee landlord system, the labour legislation, the enfranchisement of women, the purge of the wartime leadership — was carried out in Japan. Okinawa was not in Japan when it was carried out.

Set that beside the northern island, where the same occupation in the same years destroyed a tenancy system that fifty years of domestic politics had not dented. Nothing of that kind reached Okinawa, and no decision was ever taken that it should not. Okinawa had simply been removed, ten months into the occupation, from the jurisdiction inside which the reforms were being made.

An externally opened window opens over a jurisdiction, not over a people. Which side of a line a population finds itself on when a conqueror's reform programme begins is determined by that conqueror's own administrative convenience, and it is determinative of everything that follows.

The day of humiliation

The Treaty of Peace with Japan was signed at San Francisco on 8 September 1951 and came into force on 28 April 1952. Its third article provided that Japan would concur in any United States proposal to place under trusteeship, with the United States as sole administering authority, the Nansei Islands south of the twenty-ninth parallel — including the Ryūkyū Islands and the Daitō Islands — together with the Nanpō Islands and certain others; and that pending the making of any such proposal the United States would have the right to exercise all and any powers of administration, legislation and jurisdiction over the territory and inhabitants of those islands.

On that day the state of war between Japan and the Allied Powers ended and the full sovereignty of the Japanese people was acknowledged. On the same day Okinawa was formally detached from Japan and placed under the government of the United States.

In Japanese schoolbooks 28 April 1952 is the day Japan regained its independence. In Okinawa it is called kutsujoku no hi, the day of humiliation, and it has been called that ever since.

The Tokara islands were returned to Japan in February 1952 and the Amami group on 25 December 1953. Okinawa waited another nineteen years.

Bayonets and bulldozers

The military administration had occupied land it required from the beginning under the law of belligerent occupation. When the peace treaty came into force the situation changed from war to peace, legal authority for continued use became necessary, and landowners began pressing for rent. At the same time the American forces began requisitioning, on a large scale, land they had not previously held.

In November 1952 the authority was created to order the eviction of ordinary dwellings and farmland for military use. The phrase Okinawans use for the requisitions that followed is bayonets and bulldozers.

In 1954 the Ryūkyū legislature adopted what became known as the four principles: no lump-sum payment for land, adequate rent, compensation for damage, and no new requisitions. In 1956 a United States congressional committee's report — the Price Report — came down in substance against them, and the response was the shima-gurumi struggle, the whole-island struggle, in which the demand was carried by the legislature, the municipalities, the landowners' associations and the political parties together. The Chief Executive of the Ryūkyū government, Higa Shūhei, supported the four principles and joined the four-party conference; he died suddenly in October 1956. The mayor of Naha, Tōma Jūgō, became Chief Executive, and the seat he vacated was won by Senaga Kamejirō of the Okinawa People's Party.

The land taken then has a consequence that persists in the arithmetic today. On the Japanese mainland, about eighty-seven per

cent of the land under United States military facilities is state-owned, because those facilities largely occupy former Imperial Japanese Army sites. In Okinawa about twenty-three per cent is state-owned and about seventy-seven per cent belongs to the prefecture, the municipalities or to private persons — because it was taken from people who owned it.

On 20 December 1970 a traffic accident involving an American serviceman in Koza set off a night in which crowds burned American vehicles and attacked American installations. The two local newspapers did not call it a riot.

What reversion cost and what it bought

Satō Eisaku and Richard Nixon agreed in November 1969 on the return of Okinawa — nuclear-free, on a par with the mainland, within 1972. The agreement concerning the Ryūkyū Islands and the Daitō Islands was signed simultaneously in Tokyo and Washington on 17 June 1971 and was carried in the American Senate by eighty-four votes to six. Japan paid three hundred and twenty million dollars. The ratifications were exchanged on 15 March 1972 and the agreement took effect on 15 May.

Two things about the manner of it belong in the record.

Yara Chōbyō had been elected in 1968 as the first Chief Executive chosen by the people of Okinawa, on a platform of immediate, unconditional and total return — meaning return without nuclear weapons and without bases. In November 1971 he travelled to Tokyo carrying a memorial on reversion measures setting out what the people of the prefecture wanted. The reversion agreement was forced through the Diet before he arrived. He became, six months later, the first governor of the restored prefecture.

And on the day of the reversion itself, 15 May 1972, the Japan–United States Joint Committee produced the document known as the 5.15 memorandum, fixing the purposes and the conditions of use of the American bases that would remain.

What changed on that day was substantial and should not be minimised. The currency changed from the dollar to the yen. Japanese law applied. The social security system was equalised with the mainland's. Okinawans became, for the first time since 1946, citizens of the state they had been made subjects of in 1879.

What did not change is measurable. In May 1972 Okinawa held 58.7 per cent of the area of facilities in Japan reserved for the exclusive use of the United States forces. By 2020 it held 70.3 per cent, on 0.6 per cent of the national land area — thirty-one facilities, some eighteen thousand hectares, about eight per cent of the prefecture and about fifteen per cent of Okinawa Island.

The concentration rose after the return, because bases on the mainland were reduced and those in Okinawa were not.

Why the question did not close

The northern island ceased to be a question. Okinawa did not, and the last fifty years are the evidence.

In 1995, after the rape of a twelve-year-old girl by three American servicemen, eighty-five thousand people assembled at Ginowan. In 2007, after the Ministry of Education required the removal from school textbooks of wording on military compulsion in the mass suicides, a hundred and ten thousand or more assembled at the same place. On 24 February 2019 the prefecture held a referendum on the landfill work required for the replacement facility at Henoko in Nago; on a turnout of 52.48 per cent, 434,273 votes were cast against it, 71.7 per cent of the votes cast and more votes than the sitting governor had received at his own election. The landfill work continued.

The Japanese government's position, consistently held by administrations of both parties, is that the return of Futenma — an air station in the middle of a city — is not achievable without a replacement facility, that the Henoko plan is the only realistic route to that return and reduces the burden on Ginowan, and that the regional security environment requires the American presence to

be maintained. The prefectural government's position is that the concentration is itself the injustice, that a replacement inside the prefecture does not reduce the burden but relocates it, and that the referendum expressed a settled view that has not been given effect. This study reports both positions and the arithmetic, and does not adjudicate between them.

Reading collapse against the framework

The rule that structural change comes from the armed and not from the ground holds here in its harshest form, and this case adds a variant the corpus has not previously had. The Ainu did not free themselves and neither did the Okinawans; the floor was cracked by the United States armed forces for reasons of their own. But in Hokkaidō the conquered population's contribution to the moment of maximum opportunity was a petition that was refused. In Okinawa its contribution was to be killed at a rate of one in four, in a battle whose operative purpose was to buy time for the invasion of somewhere else. **A colonial order in extremity does not merely fail to protect the conquered; where the conquered occupy ground the metropole needs to trade for time, the order will spend them, and will do so using the loyalty its own formation policy manufactured.** Sixty years of teaching Okinawan children to be Japanese ended in an army order making their language a capital offence, issued by the force they had been taught to belong to.

An externally opened window opens over a jurisdiction, not over a people. The American occupation of Japan was a real reform: it broke the landlord system, enfranchised women, and wrote a constitution that still stands. None of it reached Okinawa, because on 29 January 1946 the islands were administratively detached from the country being reformed, for reasons of military convenience that had nothing to do with anyone living on them. **Where liberation arrives as a foreign administration, what a population receives is determined by which side of an administrative boundary it occupies on the day the programme starts —**

and that boundary will be drawn by the liberator, in his own interest, before anybody has been consulted.

A defeated metropole's recovery of sovereignty can be paid for with its periphery, and the transaction will be recorded as the metropole's liberation. On 28 April 1952 Japan regained its independence and Okinawa was detached and handed to a foreign government for an indefinite term. Both statements describe one treaty article. **Where a defeated state negotiates its own restoration, the periphery is the most saleable asset it holds, because it is the only asset whose loss will not be felt by the electorate that has to ratify the treaty** — and the date will thereafter appear in the national calendar as a day of recovery and in the periphery's as a day of humiliation, which is the seam of this study drawn as a single line through one afternoon.

And the third outcome — naturalisation — did not occur here, which tells us what naturalisation requires. The northern island stopped being a question because there was no metropole to withdraw from it, no majority to hand it back to, and no separate status left to dissolve; the colonial apparatus survived intact precisely because nobody ever had occasion to abolish it. Okinawa had all three of the things Hokkaidō lacked. It was handed back, by one power to another, in living memory. It retains a population that understands itself as distinct. And it retained a separate status in the one respect that carries weight, because 0.6 per cent of the national territory holds 70 per cent of the exclusive-use base area and that share rose after the return. **A conquest naturalises when nothing about the territory any longer requires a decision to be taken separately about it. Where even one question must continue to be answered separately — and here it is the same question that has been answered separately since 1609, which is what these islands are for — the colonial status does not dissolve. It migrates into that question and goes on living there**, which is why a prefecture with the same laws, the same currency and the same passports as the rest of the country can nonetheless hold a referendum about itself and lose.

One thing this module has counted only in the aggregate. It has given the dead as a proportion and the bases as a percentage. What the whole arrangement cost, item by item, on both sides of the ledger, and what it built that would not otherwise have been built, is the accounting — and that is what comes next.

❧

A note on sources. This module quotes nothing exactly in the original. The substance of Article 3 of the Treaty of Peace with Japan is given in paraphrase from the Okinawa Prefectural Archives' account, which quotes the article; the treaty text is public and should be consulted directly by anyone relying on its precise terms.

The casualty figures are those published in March 1976 by the relief section of the Okinawa prefectural government's livelihood and welfare department, as reproduced in the Japanese reference literature and on the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs' own pages: 188,136 Japanese dead and missing, comprising 65,908 servicemen from outside the prefecture, 28,228 locally conscripted servicemen and an estimated 94,000 civilians, against a pre-war prefectural population of about 490,000. American losses are given as 12,281 in the United States official history, which is the figure the Foreign Ministry cites, and as 20,195 dead and missing in the Japanese reference literature; both are reported here. The conventional total of about two hundred thousand for the ground battle is described in the same literature as an estimate whose real value is not established. The figure of at least a thousand deaths in the mass suicides is from the Japanese press and is a conservative floor; higher figures circulate and the counting is itself part of the dispute described in this study's seventh module.

The characterisation of the battle as a delaying action for the defence of the home islands, and the term sute-ishi, are standard in Okinawan usage and are used by the Okinawa Prefectural Peace Memorial Museum in the title of its own exhibition; this study takes the term from that institutional usage rather than advancing it as its own characterisation.

The directive of 29 January 1946 separating the Nansei Islands south of thirty degrees north from Japan, and its consequence that the mainland democratisation measures including the new constitution were not applied in Okinawa, are from the Okinawa Prefectural Archives. The return of the Tokara islands in February 1952 and the Amami group on 25 December 1953 are from the Japanese reference literature.

The land requisitions, the shift from belligerent occupation to peacetime use, the eviction authority of November 1952, the four principles, the Price Report and the whole-island struggle of 1956, Higa Shūhei's death in October 1956 and the succession of Tōma Jūgō and Senaga Kamejirō, follow the Japanese reference literature, which cites Arashiro Toshiaki's Ryūkyū and Okinawa History and Nakano Yoshio and Arasaki Moriteru's Postwar History of Okinawa. Neither has been read directly here. The Koza incident of 20 December 1970 and the local preference for a word other than riot are from the same literature.

The Satō–Nixon agreement of November 1969, the signature of the reversion agreement on 17 June 1971, the Senate vote of 84 to 6, the exchange of ratifications on 15 March 1972 and the effective date of 15 May, are from the Japanese Foreign Ministry's diplomatic bluebook for 1972 and its archival materials. The payment of three hundred and twenty million dollars and the 5.15 memorandum are from the Japanese reference literature. The account of Yara Chōbyō's memorial and of the reversion agreement being carried before he reached Tokyo is from Japanese educational sources citing the standard textbook literature; this study has not traced it to a contemporary record, and it should be verified before it is relied upon further.

The base figures are the Okinawa prefectural government's own: 0.6 per cent of the national land area, about 70.3 per cent of the area of facilities reserved for the exclusive use of the United States forces, thirty-one facilities, about eighteen thousand hectares, about eight per cent of the prefecture and fifteen per cent of Okinawa Island, together with the series showing the prefecture's share rising from 58.7 per cent at reversion. The ownership breakdown — about 87 per cent state-owned on the mainland against about 23 per cent in Okinawa — is from the Japanese reference literature. The 2019 referendum figures are from the Okinawa Times of 25 February 2019: 434,273 votes against on a turnout of 52.48 per cent, 71.7 per cent of votes cast; the Japanese reference literature gives 72.2 per cent, and both are reported. The 1995 and 2007 rally figures are organisers' counts and have been disputed.

The base question is a live political controversy. The positions of the Japanese government and of the prefectural government are stated above as each of them states it, from the Japanese government's published materials and the prefecture's own base-problem publications respectively. This study does not adjudicate between them and no part of the framework argument above depends on either being correct.

MODULE 11

ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-FOUR BY THE ENEMY

Module 11 — the grim accounting, 1609–1961: what the sword cost, why the metabolic note did not fall due at the conquest and fell due twice afterwards, what was built and who paid for it, and the items that go in neither column

A case study in the Patterns of Power series · Thomas J. Bryan with Claude (Anthropic) · held as tested, not revealed

The sword column is almost empty, and that is the first finding

Set out everything this order killed people with, between 1879 and 1944, and the list is short enough to read in a breath.

Nobody died in the taking of March 1879. About a hundred officials were held in cells in August of that year and beaten with rods; one death under interrogation is recorded, in June, in connection with unauthorised travel to China. One man was killed on Miyako in July 1879, by a crowd of his own neighbours, for having gone to work for the new government. From 1885 to 1889 men who went to China could be imprisoned for up to five hundred days under a revived clause of the abolished kingdom's own penal code. Between 1899 and 1903, six hundred and ninety-two women were arrested for tattooing their hands. Conscription arrived in 1898 and men evaded it by crossing to Fuzhou, some of them for the next thirty-nine years.

That is the whole of the direct coercive cost of sixty-six years of rule over a third of a million people. It is the lowest sword column

in this collection by a wide margin, and the reason is established in the first module of this study: the weapons had been gathered to Shuri in the sixteenth century and the shizoku forbidden to carry them after 1609, so the conqueror of 1879 arrived on ground that had been disarmed twice by other people and paid nothing for either.

A study that stopped at 1944 would report one of the mildest conquests on record.

Why the metabolic note did not fall due at the conquest

The usual mechanism is this. An advanced order raises a popula - tion above what the land unaided would carry, by coordination — irrigation, storage, distribution, the suppression of raiding, the movement of food from a surplus district to a deficit one. Conquest breaks the coordination. The population is then above the line with nothing holding it there, and the difference is paid in hunger over the following decade.

In Okinawa the note did not fall due, and the reason is the policy this study has been tracking since its second module. The con - queror did not break the coordination. He kept it. The kingdom's land system, its taxation, its magiri administration and its ranking of persons were all preserved by deliberate decision on 25 June 1879, and were still running in 1899. The apparatus that moved grain, assessed liability and enforced collection changed its master and not its mechanism.

The demographic record shows the result. The count taken in 1880 gave the prefecture something above three hundred and fifty thousand people. By 1940 the figure was between about four hun - dred and ninety thousand — the number usually given for the population at the time of the battle — and about five hundred and seventy-five thousand on the census reckoning; the difference is largely a matter of whether emigrants on the register are counted. Either way the population rose by something between forty and

sixty per cent across the prefectural period, through a conquest, an annexation and the dissolution of every institution the country had.

Where a conqueror preserves the conquered order's coordination, the metabolic note is not called at the conquest. That is the confirmation. What follows is the complication.

It fell due in 1921, and the trigger was not disorder

The note was called forty-two years late, and nothing was broken when it was called. What had happened instead was that the coordination had been pointed at one thing.

Sugar was the only crop in the islands that could be turned into money. About seven in ten Okinawans farmed; the average holding was around seven tan and more than half of households worked less than five. The arrangement by which a household ate was: grow cane, sell it, buy rice and daily goods with the proceeds, and eat sweet potato in between. That is not subsistence agriculture. It is a trade, and it depends on a price.

During the European war the sugar price roughly tripled and Okinawa had men called sugar millionaires. When Europe recovered and Japan fell into the postwar depression, the price collapsed onto a prefecture that had nothing else to sell, that had been taxed on that one commodity since 1901, and whose milling technology the metropole had left fourteen years behind the newer colony it had bought in 1895.

The proportion of Okinawan taxpayers in arrears was 0.3 per cent in 1919. In 1921 it was 47.4 per cent.

People who could not get rice, and then could not get sweet potato, ate cycad, which had been planted since the eighteenth century as a famine reserve and which is poisonous if it is not prepared correctly, and people died of it. Municipal finances broke; officials and teachers went unpaid; banks failed; and the standard Japanese reference works record, in the same passage, the selling of human beings. In 1930 the world slump arrived on top of it.

Nothing had been disorganised. The registers were in order, the police were in place, the schools were open, the land was surveyed and titled, and the taxes were assessed to the individual. What had changed was a number quoted in Osaka.

A monoculture's carrying capacity is set by a price, not by an acreage. It can be halved by a decision taken in another country, or by no decision at all, without one thing on the ground being altered — and the coordination that keeps the population above the line is precisely what converts a distant price into local starvation, because it is the coordination that made specialising rational in the first place.

And the default was paid in departures rather than in deaths

The reason the 1920s do not appear in the mortality tables as a famine is that the people left.

Between 1899 and 1938, 72,134 Okinawans went overseas — about twelve per cent of the prefecture's population. Between 1923 and 1930, one in every ten emigrants leaving Japan came from a prefecture holding well under one per cent of Japan's people. Others went to Osaka, where they unloaded ships, worked in the spinning mills, and lived in shacks on reclaimed marshland under notices refusing Ryūkyūans. And the money they sent back reached, at its peak, more than sixty per cent of the prefecture's annual revenue.

Where a population has an exit, the metabolic default is discharged through the passport office rather than through the graveyard, and the accounting has to be done in the emigration returns or it will not be done at all. A study reading only mortality data would record that Okinawa came through the interwar depression without a demographic catastrophe. What actually happened is that one Okinawan in eight left the islands, and a substantial part of what kept the remainder solvent was wages earned on somebody else's plantation.

Yaeyama, 1945

The second default was not economic and it was not accidental, and it is the sharpest entry in this study's whole ledger.

Malaria was endemic in parts of the Yaeyama islands, and the Japanese administration had built machinery against it. Regulations established a malaria prevention squad with an office inside the Yaeyama island administration; from the following year there was periodic blood-testing in the affected districts, treatment, distribution of mosquito nets, and clearance work against the breeding grounds. Infection was coming under control. The state knew, in detail and on paper, which districts were malarial and which were not.

In the spring and summer of 1945 the Japanese army ordered the population of the Yaeyama group out of their villages and into the mountains and to Iriomote — that is, out of the districts that were free of the disease and into the districts that were not. The order to Hateruma came at the end of March, about three months before the general Yaeyama evacuation order; some sixteen hundred people were moved to the Haemi district of Iriomote, which was known to be malarial, and the islanders objected and were moved anyway.

Farming stopped. Rations effectively ceased after June. There were no medical supplies. People lay sick in huts and died in sequence. The army lifted the evacuation order on 23 July but the order was not properly communicated and many districts were late returning; in some places the local commander did not tell the evacuees that the war had ended on 15 August and issued no release, and the confusion continued.

The figures compiled by the education bureau of the Ryūkyū government in 1956 read: deaths from air raids, 174; deaths from malaria as a result of being forcibly withdrawn into the mountains, 3,647.

The Yaeyama population was 31,681 on the corrected count. Of them 16,884 contracted malaria — more than half — and 3,647 died, about eleven and a half per cent of everybody in the islands. On

Hateruma, over five hundred of about sixteen hundred people died: a third of the island. No American landing was ever made on Yaeyama.

Twenty-one people died of the evacuation for every one killed by the enemy.

The eradication of malaria in Yaeyama was completed under the American administration, with the Yaeyama civil government health department, atebrin, and the work of local physicians — Yoshino Kōzen, Ōhama Shinken, and the sanitary inspector Kuroshima Naoki. The last infection was recorded on Iriomote in 1961. Ōhama identified a previously undescribed vector mosquito, which carries his name.

The public-health apparatus of a colonial order is also a map of where a population must not be sent, and in extremity it will be used as the second thing rather than the first. The state that built the malaria squad, and the state that ordered the islanders into the malarial zone, were the same state, acting on the same information, twenty years apart.

And the main islands

The rest of the war's account has been given in the previous module and is entered here for the total. Okinawan dead: 122,228, of whom 94,000 were civilians and 28,228 locally conscripted servicemen, out of a prefectural population of about 490,000 — roughly one in four. At least a thousand of them died in the mass suicides. An unknown number were killed by Japanese soldiers as suspected spies, under a criterion that included speaking their own language.

What was built, and who paid for it

The other column is not empty and a serious accounting has to fill it honestly.

By the end of 1903 every farmer in Okinawa held, for the first time in the history of the islands, a registered title to the ground he

worked, which he could sell, mortgage or leave to a son. The per-capita levy on Miyako and Yaeyama, which had run since 1637 and had taken sixteen bales out of eighteen from at least one household, was gone in the same year.

School attendance went from 2.85 per cent of the eligible children in 1883 — the lowest figure in Japan — to 44 per cent in 1899 and to something approaching universality by the 1930s. There was a normal school from 1880, middle schools, a prefectural library, and a route through the higher schools to the imperial universities that produced Okinawa's own doctors, engineers, mayors, journalists and one admiral.

There was public health: the malaria squad in Yaeyama, and a response to cholera. There was a prefectural light railway from 1914, running until March 1945; steamer routes to Osaka; a postal service from 1874 and telephones available to ordinary subscribers from 1910; department stores in Naha in the 1920s and 1930s. There was a centrifugal sugar mill from 1909. There was municipal government from 1908, a prefectural assembly from 1909, a parliamentary franchise from 1912 on the main island and from 1920 in the south.

Two things need saying about that column. The first is that almost every item in it arrived late and by a special track, and several of them arrived because Okinawans went to Tokyo at their own expense and demanded them. The second is who paid. The prefecture's largest single source of funds, in its worst years, was money sent home by Okinawans working abroad. The land settlement was a revenue measure of the Finance Ministry. The head tax went because two Miyako farmers sold their fields for the fare to the Diet.

The items that go in neither column

Some things in this account cannot be given a figure and must not therefore be omitted.

A language was made a punishable thing to speak, for sixty years, by an instrument nobody ever ordered and children operated on

each other; and it ended as a capital offence in an army bulletin. A hierarchy of village priestesses that a king had assembled in the 1470s was not abolished but had its endowment converted, by one clause of a land statute, into somebody's private farm. A common woodland that villages had maintained by unpaid labour for gen - erations was taken into state ownership and its best ground sold to nobles, outside merchants and officials.

And there is one prohibition, which corrects a finding made earlier in this study and should be corrected in the open.

This study's fourth module concluded that the identity attack on Okinawa was narrow — that the state went at the language and the school and left the calendar, the sacred places and the household rites alone. That is right as far as it goes and it is incomplete, be - cause it missed the one indigenous practice that was prohibited outright.

Hajichi was the tattooing of the backs of women's hands, done at marriage or coming of age, understood as protection and as beauty and, in some accounts, as a means of not being taken away to Yamato. Japan prohibited tattooing generally in 1872 and extended a prohibition to Amami in 1876. Okinawa was exempted, on the prefecture's own advice that enforcement there would be difficult, and the exemption held for twenty-seven years. The prohibition came into force on 20 October 1899 — the year of the Land Rearrangement Act.

Yamamoto Yoshimi's research gives the enforcement figures. In the five years from 1899 to 1903, cumulative arrests of women in Okinawa under the prohibition numbered 692. Arrests for the cor - responding minor offence in Tokyo over the same period numbered forty. Seventeen times as many, in a prefecture with a fraction of the population.

What that produced is on the record too: marriages broken off; women in emigrant communities abroad denounced by other Ja - panese and in some cases sent home; a schoolgirl at one element - ary school denounced as a savage and pressed to burn the marks off her hands with hydrochloric acid. The campaign that made it pos -

sible was the customs improvement movement of roughly 1897 to 1906, which targeted the yuta, the courtship gatherings, the hand tattoos and Ryūkyūan dress — and which was driven substantially from inside Okinawa, by the assimilationists, and not only from Tokyo.

Where a formation policy appears to have spared indigenous practice, look at the practices that belong to women. They are the ones a conqueror can prohibit without disturbing anybody who holds a position, and they will therefore be the first to be given up and the last to appear in an accounting.

Against what is this measured

The counterfactual is not an undisturbed kingdom, and pretending otherwise would falsify the sum.

What existed in 1879 was a small state with no army, one export, a population its own registers could not count, a per-capita levy on two of its island groups, and a licensed trade with a Chinese court that had already ceased to be worth anything. It sat between two expanding empires in the age of imperialism, on the sea approaches to both, and it had signed treaties with three Western powers who had come to its harbour with warships. In 1880 Japan and China negotiated its partition between them, and it was not partitioned only because Ryūkyūans in Peking lobbied against it and the Qing declined to sign. Something was going to be done to these islands by somebody.

That does not discharge the account. It changes what the account is measured against, and the change cuts both ways: the achievements are smaller than they look, because much of what arrived would have arrived under any modernising administration, and the costs are not excused, because the specific things that were done — the levy kept for twenty-four years, the forest taken, the tongue punished, the hands, the evacuation into the malarial districts, the battle fought to buy time — were chosen from among alternatives by people who could have chosen otherwise.

Reading the accounting against the framework

A preserved order does not default on its metabolic note at the conquest. The framework expects the note to be called when a conqueror smashes the coordination that held a population above what the land unaided would carry. Okinawa preserved the coordination as a matter of announced policy, and the population rose by half across the colonial period. That is the mechanism confirmed by its absence, and it should be recorded as one of the real returns of the cheap option — the conqueror who leaves the machine running does not have to feed the people it was feeding.

But the note is not cancelled; it is rewritten, and the new instrument is a price. What fell due in 1921 was not disorder. It was a specialisation that the preserved coordination had made rational and then enforced. **Where a colonial economy is reduced to one export, its carrying capacity ceases to be a function of its acreage and becomes a function of a quotation in the metropole's market** — and it can be halved without a single institution failing, a single official leaving his post, or a single field going out of cultivation. The framework should stop looking for the metabolic default in the decade after a conquest and start looking for it in the decade after a commodity price peak.

Where a population can leave, the default is paid in departures and will not appear in the death rate. Twelve per cent of Okinawans went overseas between 1899 and 1938; one in ten of Japan's emigrants in the worst years came from these islands; and remittances became the prefecture's largest source of funds. **An emigration figure of that size is a famine that produced no corpses**, and any accounting that reads mortality alone will report a crisis that did not occur.

The largest item in the ledger was inflicted by the order on a population it had spent sixty years forming, using the knowledge it had built to protect them. The Yaeyama malaria control apparatus told the state exactly which districts were lethal. In 1945 the

army moved the population into those districts, and 3,647 people died of the evacuation against 174 killed by the enemy in islands that were never invaded. **A colonial order's public-health record is also a map of where its population must not be sent, and the same file serves both purposes; which purpose it is used for is decided by whether the population is currently an asset or an obstruction.**

And an accounting must be prepared to correct itself in public. This module has had to reverse a finding made in this study's fourth: that the state went at the tongue and left the rest. It also went at the hands, twenty-seven years late, having declined to do so earlier because enforcement looked difficult, and then enforced it at seventeen times the metropolitan rate against women only, with the local assimilationists pushing hardest. The general lesson is a method one. **A survey of what a formation policy prohibited will systematically miss the prohibitions that fall on women, because those leave no institutional casualty — no office abolished, no income extinguished, nobody with a position to defend who lost one** — and they will accordingly be absent from the administrative record that a study of institutions reads.

One thing remains. This study has now set out what was done, by whom, with what instruments, at what price. What it has not done is put this conquest beside the others — what it shares with them, where it breaks the pattern, and what the strongest case against everything said here would be. That is the last thing.

❧

A note on sources. This module quotes nothing exactly. Its figures are assembled from sources credited in earlier modules and repeated here for the total, and the cautions entered there apply unchanged.

New to this module: the Yaeyama war malaria. The figures of 174 deaths from air raids and 3,647 from malaria following the forced withdrawal into the mountains are those published by the education bureau of the Ryūkyū government in Ryūkyū shiryō, volume 1 (1956), as quoted at second hand in the Japanese reference literature; this study has not seen that volume. The Yaeyama population of 31,681 and the infection figure of 16,884 are as

displayed by the Yaeyama Peace Memorial Museum, whose panel figures were revised in 2022. The Hateruma evacuation of about sixteen hundred people to the Haemi district of Iriomote, the objection of the islanders, and the death of more than five hundred, follow the Japanese press and documentary literature. The account of the malaria prevention squad established at the Yaeyama island administration, the suppression of infection before the war, the postwar eradication under the American administration with atebrin, the participation of Yoshino Kōzen, Ōhama Shinken and Kuroshima Naoki, the final case on Iriomote in 1961 and the mosquito named for Ōhama, are from the Japanese Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare's published material. The Ministry gives the number infected as about seventeen thousand and the deaths as about three thousand six hundred, consistent with the museum's figures.

Also new: the prohibition of hajichi. The general prohibition of tattooing in 1872, its extension to Amami in 1876, the exemption of Okinawa on the prefecture's own representation that enforcement would be difficult, the non-enforcement of the 1880 penal code provision there, and the coming into force of the prohibition on 20 October 1899, are from the Japanese reference literature. The enforcement figures — 692 cumulative arrests of women in Okinawa between 1899 and 1903 against forty for the corresponding offence in Tokyo — are Yamamoto Yoshimi's, from her research on tattooed women in Okinawa and Taiwan, as reported in the Okinawan and national press coverage of the 2019 exhibition at the Okinawa Prefectural Museum and Art Museum. Her work should be read directly by anyone building on this point. The accounts of broken marriages, denunciation in emigrant communities, and the schoolgirl pressed to burn the marks off with hydrochloric acid are from the same reporting and from the Japanese reference literature, and are testimony rather than established fact. The customs improvement movement of about 1897 to 1906 and its targets are from the Ryūkyū Kingdom Exchange History and Modern Okinawa digital archive.

The infrastructure and development items — the prefectural light railway from 1914 to March 1945, the Osaka Shōsen routes, the postal service, telephone availability from 1910, and the department stores opened by sojourning merchants in 1922 and 1935 — are from the same digital archive. The population figures for 1880 and 1940 repeat those given in this study's landscape and tenth module and carry the same discrepancy, which is noted in the text rather than resolved.

The partition negotiation of 1880 referred to in the counterfactual repeats material established earlier and carries the same attributions.

MODULE 12

CALLED A PREFECTURE FROM THE FIRST DAY

Module 12 — convergence and divergence: what this case shares with the others, where it breaks the pattern and why, what the framework has to change, and the strongest case that none of this was a conquest at all

A case study in the Patterns of Power series · Thomas J. Bryan with Claude (Anthropic) · held as tested, not revealed

Where it converges

Set the Ryūkyūs beside the other cases in this collection and the mechanism is the same mechanism, running on unfamiliar ground.

Legitimacy was borrowed, not minted. The imperial decree of 14 September 1872 grounded the annexation on the proposition that Ryūkyū had for generations been fuyō — a dependency — of Satsuma. That word was not a Meiji coinage. It is the word Shō Nei was made to write in the ninth month of 1611, at Kagoshima, in an oath in which he also described himself as a bird in a cage. And the decree's other claim — that the two peoples were of one kind and their speech and writing not different — was not a Meiji coinage either: it is the argument the Ryūkyūan regent Haneji Chōshū entered in the kingdom's own first official history in 1650 and restated in his own hand in 1673, under the supervision of the conquerors who had taken his king north. A conqueror in 1879 reached into a drawer and found the deed already drawn, twice, by the conquered.

The floor rested on somebody else's prior disarmament. Six hundred men took a country of a third of a million in four days without firing. The reason is that a Ryūkyūan king had gathered the weapons to Shuri in the early sixteenth century and Satsuma had forbidden the shizoku to carry them after 1609. Japan paid nothing for either and inherited the quiet.

The cheap option was to keep the machine. The old land system, the old taxation, the old local administration and the old ranking of persons were preserved by announced policy on 25 June 1879, and the drafting file gives the reason without embarrassment: abolish - ing them at home had led from the abolition of the domains to the samurai rebellions, and that road was not to be taken again.

The default is measurable by what the elite war left standing. A royalist party petitioned Peking for twenty years; a movement asked that the deposed dynasty be made hereditary governors; three newspapers representing the aristocracy, the mainland merchants and the commoner notables fought each other for thirty years; a democratic movement fought the governor over the forest and the franchise; peasants from Miyako beat the prefecture in the Imperial Diet. After 1897 not one of them put in issue that the islands were Japanese.

And the censorship column is empty. The Meiji state built a censor in 1869 and used it continuously on domestic liberals for fifty years. It was not turned on Okinawa, because the newspaper that mattered was founded by the last king's fourth son, opened with the governor's own overseer in the editor's chair, and suppressed the franchise movement itself.

Where it diverges, and why

Four divergences matter, and each of them turns on the same vari - able.

Formation was pressed rather than withheld. The framework, built on European cases, expects a colonial order to withhold formation, because forming the conquered means admitting them.

Japan pressed it: a language school in the government building in February 1880, before there was a school system; universal schooling by the 1930s from a base of 2.85 per cent in 1883; standard Japanese enforced in classrooms by an instrument nobody ever ordered. This is the Roman answer rather than the British one — the conquered are to become the conqueror.

The apex was seizable and was not seized. In 1609 Satsuma found what the framework treats as the ideal object: a throne, a council, a survey-able tax base, an appointed officialdom, a national priesthood, and a bureaucracy trained to obey whoever sat at Shuri. It surveyed the kingdom, took a portion, granted the rest back to its own king as a fief, extracted a document saying the arrangement had always existed, put twenty men in a house at Naha and left the incumbent on the seat for two hundred and sixty-eight more years. It did that because the seat's value came from a licence issued by a court in Fuzhou to a specific investitured person, and that licence could not be taken by force from a party the conqueror's ships could not reach.

There were no settlers, so there was no settler robe and no vacancy fiction. The Land Rearrangement Act of 1899 does not say the ground was empty. It says that land under the village rotation shall be the property of the person who received the allocation — a collective holding declared partible, and the resulting share declared already to belong to whoever held the turn. Nobody was told he had been given anything, because grammatically nobody had.

And it did not naturalise. The northern island stopped being a question. This one did not: 434,273 votes against the Henoko landfill in February 2019, 71.7 per cent of votes cast, more than the sitting governor's own total, and the work continued.

The variable underneath all four

The framework's central fork asks what the conqueror found. This case establishes that the second question decides more than the first.

What Japan wanted in the Ryūkyūs was neither the ground nor the labour. It was **position**: a southern boundary against a rival empire's claims, and a name on a map that would read correctly in Peking, Washington and London. The islands are coral limestone with thin soil and no metals. There was nothing there worth taking except where they are.

Everything else follows. A conquest undertaken for position is satisfied by the name, so the name arrived first — a prefecture on 4 April 1879, in fourteen words, with the abolished kingdom's land law, tax law and local administration running underneath it for the next twenty years. Position needs no settlers, so none came, and no vacancy fiction was required. Position requires that the population be unambiguously the conqueror's own, so assimilation was pressed hard on the one thing that would show — the tongue — and rationed on the qualification that would let a man compete outside the prefecture. Position is served by an administrative track that produces the correct name without the expense of the general law, which is what the special ward system of 1896, the special town-and-village system of 1908, the special prefectural system of 1909 and the reserved commencement date of the franchise between 1900 and 1912 all are.

A conquest undertaken for position rather than for ground or labour produces a colony that looks like integration, because position is satisfied by the name.

And the same proposition has a second edge, which the twentieth century supplied. A territory held for position is disposable the moment a better position is available. In 1945 it was expended as a delaying action for the invasion of somewhere else. In 1952 it was the consideration by which the metropole purchased back its own sovereignty.

The strongest case that none of this was a conquest

It is a serious case and it is held by serious people, and it goes like this.

Okinawa was not a colony. It was a periphery being integrated into a modern nation-state, by precisely the instruments every modernising state of the nineteenth century used on every one of its peripheries, and every element this study has catalogued has an exact counterpart inside the metropolitan territory of France or of Japan itself.

The dialect placard was not an Okinawan instrument; it was used in Tōhoku and Kyushu on speakers of Japanese dialects, and its European originals were used on Breton and Occitan children in the French Republic. A national school system imposed on unwilling villagers is what happened in Japan too, where peasants burned schools in the 1870s and enrolment did not pass ninety per cent until 1902. The land settlement of 1899 was not a foreign instrument: it was Japan's own land tax reform of 1873, run by the same Finance Ministry with the same machinery, twenty-six years late, with no Dawes Act behind it and no foreign adviser in the file. Conscription was resisted with riots on the mainland before it ever reached Okinawa. A delayed franchise for poor peripheral districts was ordinary; Hokkaidō and the Ogasawara Islands were named in the same clause.

And the negative facts are the strongest part of the case. Okinawa was never governed by a Governor-General with power to legislate for it, as Taiwan and Korea were. Its people were never denied Japanese nationality. There was no racial bar and no separate legal personality. It was called a prefecture from 4 April 1879, in the same official gazette and the same word as Kanagawa — where Hokkaidō, which this collection treats as the comparison, had a colonisation office. Richard Siddle has put that administrative difference in print and asked whether delayed modernisation as a Japanese region is not the better paradigm than colonialism. Mark

Peattie's judgement is that the annexation was less the initial step toward colonial expansion than a reassertion of national authority over territory traditionally within the Japanese cultural sphere.

And then the decisive argument, which is about the Okinawans themselves. When they had a press, they founded it to argue for assimilation. When they had a franchise, they did not use it to demand separation. Ōta Chōfu wanted Okinawa to resemble the other prefectures down to the manner of sneezing. Iha Fuyū built the study of Okinawa on the proposition that the two peoples shared an origin. The petitioners of Hirara in 1906 asked to be let in, in the emperor's own language. The men of Miyako who beat the prefecture in the Diet were using Japanese institutions to become more fully Japanese subjects. The reversion movement of the 1960s demanded return to Japan, not independence, and Okinawa voted for it. To call all of that colonialism is to inform a population that what it wanted, said, voted for and fought for was false consciousness — which is condescending, and, being unfalsifiable, is not history.

That is the case. It should be met, not deflected.

The answer

Most of it is true, and the true parts have to be conceded first because they are not incidental.

The parallels are real. The placard was used on Japanese children in Japanese prefectures. The land settlement was a domestic instrument with no foreign model — this study searched for one and found none, and has recorded the absence as a finding. Conscription was resisted at home before it was resisted here. The delayed franchise clause named three places, of which two were not Ryūkyū. There was no Governor-General, no separate nationality, no racial bar. And the demand of the ablest Okinawans was for fuller inclusion, and it was made by them, in their own newspapers, at their own expense, and it would be both false and insulting to describe it as anything other than what they said it was.

The answer is not that those facts are wrong. It is that the framework never asserted the categories differ. It asserts that the mechanism does not.

On the parallel with metropolitan peripheries. The corpus has held from the beginning that a state's formation of its own population and a conqueror's formation of a subject one are the same operation at different intensities, and that the Meiji state was itself manufacturing Japanese out of two hundred and sixty domains at the moment it began manufacturing them out of Ryūkyūans. That is not a rebuttal of this study; it is one of its findings, and it appears in the module on formation. What the parallel cannot absorb is the specific arithmetic. Tōhoku was not excluded by name from the founding electoral law of 1889. Tōhoku did not wait until 1912 for a franchise whose commencement date the executive held from 1900. Tōhoku did not keep a levy assessed per head, from which one caste was exempt, for twenty-four years after the state abolished per-head assessment for its own subjects. Tōhoku's governors were not, without a single exception in sixty-six years, men from somewhere else. Those are not differences of degree along the same line; they are a separate administrative track, and the state described it as one every time it legislated by special ordinance.

On the reassertion of national authority. The formula requires the authority to have existed. Its entire documentary basis is a chain of three instruments: a sentence extracted from a defeated king at Kagoshima in 1611, which describes a dependency existing from of old and was signed by a man who wrote in the same document that he had been as a bird in a cage; an imperial decree of 1872 which recites that sentence as its warrant; and a treaty article of 1874 which uses a cognate word about the Miyako dead and does not mention Ryūkyū at all, and which Edwin Pak-Wah Leung's reappraisal holds secured no Chinese recognition of anything. Naming that as a legal fiction is not a verdict. It is a description of a document, and the study is obliged to make it.

On the absence of a Governor-General. This is the counter-position's best card and it should be played at full strength: the ad-

ministrative form genuinely was different, and this study's ninth module concluded that Okinawa occupied a third position the framework had not previously described — inside the constitutional state and outside the general law. But note what that concession costs the counter-position rather than this study. The instrument of exclusion inside a constitutional state is not a Governor-General. It is a proviso, and the record it leaves shows no repression, a considerate government, and a population that cannot vote. When Ichiki Kitokurō explained to the Diet in 1899 that giving Okinawa the franchise would produce an unfair result, every fact he cited was true and every one of them was a consequence of the preservation policy the same government had adopted for its own convenience. That circle is the mechanism this collection exists to describe, and it is not less a mechanism for being administered by officials who were not lying.

On what the Okinawans wanted. They wanted in. That is established, and this study has recorded it in their own words. What the counter-position takes as evidence that there was no conquest, the framework takes as evidence about a position — and it predicted it in advance. The third module established that the robe Japan offered was common ancestry rather than permanent difference, and that a robe of common ancestry is the only kind the conquered can use offensively, because the only way to use it is to demand promotion. The ninth established that the metropole's own institutions were the only forum in which a claim could be heard at all: a petition in the emperor's own language of impartial benevolence, from farmers on Miyako in 1906, was adopted by the House of Peers and the law changed thirteen years later, while thirty-one petitions to a court in Peking that was obliged to hear nothing produced nothing. Demanding inclusion was the correct move from that position, made by intelligent men who had measured their field accurately. It is evidence about the field. It is not evidence that the field was not made.

And there is one test the counter-position cannot pass. Brittany was not detached from France in January 1946 and handed to a

foreign government for twenty-seven years while the rest of the country received a new constitution, a land reform and women's suffrage. Tōhoku was not fought over as a delaying action to buy weeks for the defence of somewhere else, at a cost of one inhabitant in four. And when France recovered its sovereignty it did not do so by consenting, in the third article of the instrument, to the indef - inite detachment of a province. Those three things happened to Okinawa, in seven years, and each of them was a decision taken by the Japanese state or on its behalf.

A territory's standing is not disclosed by what it is called in the ordinary years. It is disclosed by what is done with it in the year the state has to choose.

The other column, held in the same hand

None of the above cancels what was built, and an accounting that omitted it would be as false as one that omitted the rest.

A peasantry that had never in the history of the islands owned a field held registered, saleable, heritable title to one by 1903. A levy assessed per head, running since 1637, taking sixteen bales out of eighteen from at least one household, was abolished in the same year, and a servile status called nago had gone before it. School at - tendance went from the lowest figure in Japan to something near universal. A malaria control programme in Yaeyama was bringing an endemic disease under control before the war, and its eradica - tion was completed in 1961. There was a railway from 1914, a tele - phone available to ordinary subscribers from 1910, a centrifugal sugar mill from 1909, municipal government from 1908, a prefec - tural assembly from 1909, and a route through the higher schools and the imperial universities that produced Okinawa's own doctors, engineers, journalists, mayors, a scholar who founded a discipline, and an admiral.

Two things must be said about that column and neither of them subtracts from it.

The first is who paid. In the prefecture's worst decade its largest single source of funds was money sent home by Okinawans working on other people's plantations. The land settlement was a Finance Ministry revenue measure whose by-product was ownership. The head tax went because two Miyako farmers sold their fields for the fare to Tokyo.

The second is who was outside it while it was being built. The Sakishima islanders, who paid the levy for twenty-four years after annexation and got the vote seven years after the main island. The tenants of the Daitō Islands, who lived on ground owned outright by a sugar company that issued its own currency and excluded the yen, who had no municipal government until 1946 and no title to their land until an American general ruled on it in 1964. The women, who had no vote anywhere in Japan, whose priestesses' service land was converted to somebody's private farm by one clause of the 1899 Act, and of whom 692 were arrested in five years for the tattoos on their hands.

Reading the whole against the framework

The framework's fork needs a second question, and the second question does more work than the first. What did the conqueror find determines whether an apex can be seized. What did the conqueror want determines everything downstream of that — the fiction, the settlement, the formation policy, the extraction instrument, and the shape the whole thing takes in the record. Where the want is ground, expect removal and a vacancy fiction. Where it is labour, expect importation and a caste settlement. **Where it is position, expect a name applied on the first day and the conquered order left running underneath it — and expect the resulting colony to be indistinguishable, in most years, from a province.** That is the single largest revision this case makes.

And a want can be satisfied by a third party, which the corpus has not previously had to model. Satsuma in 1609 met a perfect apex and declined to occupy it, because the seat's value derived

from recognition by a court it could not coerce. **Where an apex's value comes from a party the conqueror cannot reach, he cannot assume the chair; he must rent it, and the rent is the permanent labour of maintaining a fiction before an audience that must never be allowed to check.** The arrangement's characteristic cost is then concealment rather than garrison, and its termination condition is written in from the start: it lasts exactly as long as the third party is worth trading through. In 1875 the Qing stopped being worth trading through, and in 1879 the fiction was cashed.

The recursion in this case is documentary rather than inferential, and that is worth recording. The framework holds that a conqueror never meets an aboriginal order, only an earlier build that took. Here the chain can be read off the page. The kingdom Japan abolished was made by a conquest in 1429 and a palace coup in 1469, held by a line whose surname was a Chinese emperor's gift, over an office that a Ming envoy's recognition in 1372 had substantially manufactured, running a national priesthood a king assembled out of local authority in the 1470s. The land act of 1899 converted that priesthood's endowment into private farms in the same clause as everybody else's fields. The decree of 1872 cited a document of 1611. The army order of 1945 applied the criterion of the schoolroom placard of 1903. Nothing in this case had to be inferred from theory; each layer names the one beneath it.

A study of a conquest must be prepared to correct itself in the open, and this one has had to. The fourth module concluded that the identity attack was narrow — the tongue taken, the calendar and the sacred places left. The eleventh had to reverse it: one indigenous practice was prohibited outright, the women's hand tattoo, deferred for twenty-seven years on the prefecture's own advice that enforcement would be difficult and then enforced at seventeen times the metropolitan rate. The general point is a method one. **A survey of what a formation policy prohibited will miss the prohibitions that fall on women, because those leave no abolished office and no extinguished income and nobody with a position who lost one.**

And the last thing belongs to whoever is reading.

This study was built from Japanese archival material, Japanese scholarship and Japanese official publications, about a conquest carried out by an Asian state on an Asian people, using instruments that were in almost every case domestic Japanese instruments rather than borrowed European ones. It contains a colonial administration whose central policy was to change nothing, a legitimating story written by the conquered themselves two centuries before the conqueror needed it, a censorship file that is empty because the local press did the work, and a subject population whose ablest members spent forty years demanding to be assimilated faster.

A reader who can see European colonialism plainly and cannot see the peripheries of his own state has a door here, because nothing of his is implicated. A reader who can see Taiwan and Korea plainly and for whom Okinawa presents as a prefecture has a different door, in the same wall. And a reader from the country that administered these islands from 1945 to 1972, and whose High Commissioner settled the Daitō land question in 1964, and whose bases occupy 70.3 per cent of the exclusive-use area on 0.6 per cent of Japan's land, is not standing outside this account either.

The arithmetic is on the page.

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A note on sources. This module introduces no new evidence. Every fact in it is drawn from the preceding eleven modules and the landscape, and carries the attributions and the cautions entered there; readers should treat the notes to those modules as the notes to this one.

Three items in the counter-position are quoted or paraphrased from named scholars and should be read directly by anyone testing this study's answer to them. Mark Peattie's characterisation of the annexation as less an initial step toward colonial expansion than a reassertion of national authority over territory traditionally within the Japanese cultural sphere, and Richard Siddle's question whether delayed modernisation as a Japanese region is not a more suitable paradigm than colonialism — together with Siddle's argument from the administrative difference between

Hokkaidō's colonisation office and Okinawa's designation as a prefecture from 1879 — are both quoted in the recent scholarship on the contiguous colonisation of the Ryūkyū Kingdom, from which this study takes them at one remove. Edwin Pak-Wah Leung's reappraisal of the 1874 settlement, in Modern Asian Studies, is likewise used as summarised in its own abstract. The counter-position stated in this module is this study's own construction from those materials and is not attributed in that form to any of the three; it has been put at the strongest form the evidence will bear, which is the discipline this collection applies to positions it is about to answer.

The one point on which this study would most welcome correction is stated here rather than buried. The Kōdōkai petition of 1896 has been used at several points as the best available evidence of where the boundary of the default lay, and this study has read only summaries of its demand and never its text. If its wording turns out to have asked for something larger than a hereditary governorship within a Japanese prefecture, the eighth module's central argument weakens and the finding above about the ceil - ing of a co-opted elite's demands would need to be restated.